MASTER PASSION;

OR,

The History

OF

FREDERICK BEAUMONT.

VOL. III

It is the show and seal of Nature's truth,
When Love's strong passion is imprest in youth

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THE

MASTER PASSION

&c.



CHAP. LVI.

Mrs. Villiers and her daughter returned from their melancholy visit with trembling nerves, and spirits extremely depressed.—Helena fancied her mother looked ill; and taking her hand, while she tenderly inquired how she felt herself, was startled on finding it much warmer than usual.

"My dearest mother," she cried, "I am certain that you are very far from well;" and looking anxiously in her face—the late affliction of Rose Woodland fresh in her mind—in an instant the sad anticipation of a similar calamity overcame her entirely.

"My dear Helena," said Mrs. Villiers

"with what are you terrifying yourself? I have been of late, as you know, a good deal agitated; and the heat of the weather and of the town, has affected my nerves, and, I believe, produced a slight degree of fever: there is nothing I bear so ill as heat, but let us once more breathe the pure air of our beloved mountains, and all will be well."

"O, that we were there!" cried Helena, "and entering on our delightful ramble with dear Mr. Melcombe!"

"This truant Beaumont must keep another term at Oxford, before that can take place," said Mrs. Villiers.

At this moment, he appeared; and Mrs. Villiers repeated to him the last words she had uttered. He subscribed to the truth of them with all his reason, though not with all his heart.

Helena then recurring to the subject of her mother's health, immediately secured his assistance in prevailing on her to call in medical advice. Mrs. Villiers was reluctant

—but it was to gratify Helena, and she complied.

Her physician confirmed her own opinion, that her complaints were nervous and feverish—prescribed quiet and country air;—and concluded by observing that it would be necessary for her now, and ever, to avoid most carefully a close, or heated atmosphere, which he was well satisfied would be fatally injurious to her constitution.

At the close of this conference with the physician, Mrs. Villiers was presented with a letter. It was from Betty, and thus it ran:—

"HORRID MADAM,

"i Receav'd Mis Hell in's leter and ham. ferry appy to heir yu arr wel. and cumming whom, i hav dun ivery think as shee hordered: the Beads was al whashed and putt up bifor hur litter cam. i hav had al thee flowers wel skewered and dri rubbed, and thee karpits well bet and prushed.—Tigur and Mr. Melcum is wel. bot i ham surry to sai Frollik is very purely an canot

cee ferry wel, and muster Melcoom thincks as how he as got a cart track in is i. bot he as takin im to norse and sais how he wil tri the receet he as got from thee fetter run away colleague. and if That Wunt doo he wil av him coached bifor yu cums whom. Bot i wasn't to tel u so he sed, Bot i lete it s'ipp outt bifor i was a War.

" ther is plenty of peace in the guardian, but the binns makes litile whey—they sai it's for wont of mourning sons. ivery think is kwite reddy for u and i ope u wil cum whoom ferry sun with my humbel dutty too mis Hell in i ham

" Horrid Maddam Yur
" humbil survent
" elizzabeth Spinliffe."

Helena, though under extreme concern at the situation of her favourite Frolick, could not help taking some share in Frederick's mirth at this very curious epistle.

" But now, my dearest mother," asked she, " when shall we set forward ?"—the regret of her approaching separation from

Beaumont, being for a moment half forgotten, in solicitude concerning the tender health of her mother.

"This day se'nnight, if you will, my love; but then you must be very gay during that short period;—you have not yet been in publick with Lady Richmond quite so frequently as, since the late events, I wished you should, and on this account only, I have delayed my departure so much beyond my original intention." Helena now waited on Lady Richmond—she was in *agonies* at hearing of her approaching departure; but found some alleviation to her sufferings in the permission to take possession of her young favourite in the mean time.

Helena, after forming three or four different engagements with her Ladyship, took her leave, and proceeded to call on Mrs. Falkener, from whom, for obvious reasons, she had of late absented herself as much as possible.

She found Mr. Falkener in the drawing-

room alone. He rose, and bowed respectfully.

"Is not Mrs. Falkener at home?" asked Helena, in some confusion.

"She is," answered he—"but she is above stairs, and, I am sorry to say, very much indisposed."

Helena was alarmed, and entreated that she might be admitted to see her—a servant entering, desired her to walk up stairs.

Mrs. Falkener had been taken suddenly ill, and had not, as yet, recovered her strength or good looks; but so gratified was she by the sight of Helena, that she appeared perfectly cheerful, and fancied herself almost well. Each, as by mutual consent, avoided the only painful subject which had ever arisen between them; and Helena quickly proceeded to communicate her anxieties respecting her mother—and ended by lamenting to her friend, that there appeared so little hope of her being able to accompany them in their approaching journey. Yet could not Helena dwell on this; —for she remembered that Mrs. Falkener

could not be of their party, without her husband.

Frederick began to feel that the moments of happiness ebbed apace; yet his absence from Helena would be short, and he should enjoy her society with tenfold relish, when rambling with her, and his other best-loved friends, among the sublime scenes to which Mr. Melcombe was to conduct them, during the latter part of the summer.

Mrs. Villiers, and her friend too, felt much regret at parting; and the former, warmly seconded by Helena, gave to Mr. and Mrs. Morley, a most cordial invitation for the following year, to her little retirement in Monmouthshire.

"We shall find no *Miss Villiers* there;" said Mrs. Morley.

"Heaven knows!" said Mrs. Villiers, sighing.

Frederick spent this last evening in Wimpole Street.

"I shall set out for Oxford the moment you are gone;" whispered he to Helena; and the moment after my arrival there, I

shall write to you: I trust you will not fail to profit by so good an example."

"Possibly not," she replied; "and now for *my* admonitions — no more duels, Frederick!"

"My resolves are very strong against them, I assure you, Helena; and that last kind admonition must render them immovable. I shall at least be safe where I am going, for there will be no Helena to fight for."

He was invited to take a farewell breakfast, the next morning.

When it was over, "After all," said he, turning to Mrs. Villiers, "I *cannot* go to Oxford, till I have at least seen you safe over Hounslow Heath — having already stolen so many days from *school*, my conscience has gradually enlarged, and I find I must steal one more; so if you will not grant me a place within the coach, I must attend you at an humble distance as an outrider; for I have ordered my horses to be here at your hour."

"Why, is it possible?" asked Mrs. Villiers.

"*Very*," answered Frederick with a lurking smile.

Helena was silent, but not vehemently displeased, nor extremely surprised.

And now the last farewells of host, hostess, and guests, were kindly spoken; and Mrs. Villiers, her daughter, and Frederick, were once more seated in a travelling coach. John remained in London, leaving the best mistresses in the world, in order "to better himself;" and Helena, who had never pardoned him for taking more care of his own ease than that of his mistress, when suffering with pain, was not sorry to see him supplanted by another attendant.

"Well! here I am to-day," said Frederick, as they drove away from the door, "but where to-morrow?"

"Not in Bosworth Field, however,"—said Mrs. Villiers.

The hours now began to fly; and the horses, Frederick was certain, were flying faster still.

He called to his servant—"Tell those fellows, that they will kill their horses if they drive at this rate."

Mrs. Villiers smiled, and maintained that they went no faster than usual.

Twenty miles were but too soon lost, when Mrs. Villiers ventured to hint to Frederick that he would kill his own horses, if he went any further.

"Remember, they are to take you to Oxford, to-morrow."

"Alas! they are," said he, "and, confound them, they will think it very proper to bait now; and 'here maun I lie,' while you are running at full speed away from me. Thus it is! so I'll e'en go and see that you have horses as cruelly fleet as these have been."

When all was again prepared, the doleful Frederick placed his friends in the carriage, and, pressing their hands affectionately, bade a thousand farewells to both, and looked ten thousand at Helena:—then, walking slowly in the track of the flying

vehicle, kept his eyes upon it, 'till it had totally disappeared.

"And now," said he to himself, "I am dead in law, for a month to come."

CHAP. LVII.

THE day was soft and temperate; the roads had been refreshed by an early morning shower; the country was in full beauty; and Helena had accomplished her wish of withdrawing her mother from the unfriendly atmosphere of London: yet,—she was not gay:—amidst all the striking and interesting objects in view, she saw but one —which was *not* in view—-the living object which she had left—standing in the high road, and then, as she had descried from the small glass at the back of the carriage, walking slowly after her.

Mrs. Villiers soon began to feel the re-

viving effects of pure air, and a changing scene, and professed herself already the better for both.

And now, Helena—like "Hope—enchanted smiled," and, consoling herself that Frederick would soon follow them, was cheerful and animated during the remainder of the journey. Without accidents, or alarms, the travellers joyfully reached their own little domain, where Mr. Melcombe waited to bid them welcome home, —which he did from his "heart of hearts."

"This moment," cried he, as he seized affectionately a hand of each, "this happy moment, richly pays me for all the length of absence past."

At that instant, Tiger burst into the parlour, from which he had with difficulty been excluded while his master gave a short reception to his friends. He now claimed his share of the general joy. His eager eyes sparkled with pleasure; his open mouth, and panting breath, seemed preparing to speak his transports. "Sporting the lion ramp'd;" he danced, he reared,

he bounded, he sprang from one to the other; nor would they suffer Mr. Melcombe to interrupt the turbulent greetings of their four-footed friend and benefactor.

"Tiger," said Mr. Melcombe, "I wish you could read the fable of the Ass and the Lap-dog!" Tiger stood still, and was evidently listening to his master, but not, as it appeared, understanding him, for his caresses became more violent than ever. In one of these tender attacks upon Helena, he contrived to catch in his mouth, a small string, to which always hung, though not always in sight, a small picture of Mrs. Villiers; the string gave way, and the picture fell on the floor. Helena, in great alarm, took it up, and then thus pathetically expostulated with him—"O Tiger, Tiger, if you had *your* mother's picture hanging round your neck, how would you like to see it treated in this manner?"

Then followed tender inquiries after Frolick,—and Helena heard, with great satisfaction, that he was in an improving state, and that the case was not so bad as

had been apprehended, and expressed in Betty's letter.

Helena wrote the most anxious inquiries to Mrs. Falkener—a fortnight elapsed—and no answer arrived—Helena grew uneasy. At the end of the third week, a message from the cottage summoned her to visit her friend. The messenger informed her that his mistress had been extremely ill. Helena returned with him to the cottage. She found Mrs. Falkener half reclined, on a sofa, with her husband seated by her side.

Helena was alarmed at the pallid looks of her friend—

"My dear Matilda," said she, "I was too sure that you had been worse again. Why did you not depute some one to write to me, both when you were ill, and after your recovery, instead of giving me up to suspense, and its long train of magnified evils?"

"Indeed, dear Helena, my silence was occasioned only by the fear of alarming you, while at so great a distance; and as

to Mr. Falkener, believe me, his kind and restless attentions to me, together with the constant anxiety of his mind during my illness, left him neither time, nor spirits, for writing to any one."

Helena regarded him with complacency: he looked a little conscious; but, affectionately taking the hand of his wife,

"Indeed, Miss Villiers," said he, "I have suffered inconceivable terrors for her life, and I cannot express to you what I feel on seeing her once more breathing this healthful air, at her own favourite cottage."

"And now," said Mrs. Falkener, "that I have a companion—for the day, I hope —do you, my dear nurse, set out for a ramble over the hills, for you have been confined like a bird in a cage, and are cruelly in want of exercise, and air."

Helena readily consented to her part of this proposal, for which she had prepared her mother, who would, therefore, not expect her return to dinner.

Mr. Falkener, saying—"I leave you, my love, in good hands, and have only to

request Miss Villiers to keep the principal share of the *talk* to herself," very obediently took his hat, and - - - - his walk.

"My dear girl," said Mrs. Falkener, affectionately embracing Helena, "the truth is, I have been in the utmost danger, (Helena trembled at this danger, although it was past,) but I shall never regret it, nor will you, when you shall hear that my illness has set my heart, comparatively, at rest."

"Thank Heaven for that," said Helena.

"I cannot now support the agitation of telling you all," resumed Mrs. Falkener, "but I *must* relieve your anxious friendship, by assuring you that the state in which I have lately been, so thoroughly awakened poor Falkener's fears, that it soon convinced me, and I believe himself, that his affection for me was stronger than either of us had latterly supposed; so that, by interesting his apprehensions for my life, as well as his pity for my sufferings, this last severe trial has produced the blessed effect of recalling, and, I trust, se-

curing, that heart which I feared was gone for ever.

" A trifling circumstance, too, betrayed to him that I had been aware of his inclination towards you: the struggle I had made to conceal this knowledge, and to forbear from all reproaches, struck him to the soul, and I sincerely believe had a greater share than all the rest, in binding him to me more firmly than ever. He confessed that your behaviour on this nice, and anxious occasion, had even augmented his former admiration of you; yet kindly said, that he could not *esteem* you more than his Matilda: ' but,' added he, ' it is ' true that I was fascinated by her graces, ' her vivacity, and a certain - - - - inde- ' finable - - - - something - - - - but, ' however, even for that apostacy, I de- ' serve not that you should thus receive my ' returning attentions; for I fear, I fear, ' my Matilda, that they have been insen- ' sibly slackening.'

" ' You have never once been unkind to ' me,' answered I, evading his implied inquiry.

" 'But praise me not too highly;—I 'might not have borne so patiently your 'preference of any other woman alive.'

" 'I solemnly believe you *would*,' answered he, 'but, even if you would *not*, 'you have exalted yourself in my esteem 'and love, by the candour of that allow-'ance.' "

These two amiable friends, well proved to deserve that name, continued to converse on this, and other interesting topics, 'till Mr. Falkener returned;—when Helena, no longer fearful of addressing him, but, on the contrary, forward to shew him kindness, re-opened to him the heaven of her smiles, and, confessing that they had a little transgressed his last injunctions, promised for both, that they would behave better in future.

He shook his head at them, saying, "She does look wearied, but I hope her chicken and glass of wine will set all right again; and, after this day, I am confident that your company will be the best cordial she can take."

The following day, Mrs. Villiers, who heard with delight, the account of all that had passed, accompanied her daughter to the cottage. Helena frequently repeated her visits, and found Mrs. Falkener constantly, and rapidly, improving, both in health, and spirits, under the fostering care of an affectionate, and grateful husband.

CHAP. LVIII.

THE long vacation was near at hand. Frederick soothed his impatience for its commencement by letters fraught with the fondest anticipations of happiness. The last of these tender epistles concluded thus:

"Yes, yes, by all those smiling pow'rs
Which strew life's thorny path with flow'rs,
And mean to bless our future hours,
Soon I'll be with thee Dearee:

" 'Till then my ardent pulse beats high,
With expectation's wildest joy,
And moments can't too swiftly fly,
'Till I am with thee Dearee.

" Oh time bring on the blithsome day,
With lightning speed, when I may stray,
With cheerful heart, and spirits gay,
In converse with my Dearee.

" But then, with more than ' miser care,'
Thy precious golden sands ah spare!—
Each is a gem of life, I swear,
When I am with thee Dearee."

Within a few days after this letter was dispatched, he set out once more towards Monmouthshire. To await the pleasure of his horses, in the matters of eating, drinking, and resting, was wholly impossible;—so he left them, and their *attendant*, to follow him at leisure, and committing himself to the more rapid conveyance of post-chaises, very shortly found himself, with the three dearest objects of his existence.

Helena, on the day upon which he was expected, had decked the house in flowers and blooming plants from the dressing-

room to the parlour; and Frederick found her in a wilderness of sweets,

"Herself a fairer flower."

His very soul looked out from his eyes while he approached her, and told her—that "he lived once again."

One gloomy evening, when, after a long continuance of heat, a mass of collected vapour had settled, in dark clouds, upon the mountains, Frederick walked to Mrs. Villiers's alone.

"Mr. Melcombe," said he "has been sent for to a sick person, at a small inn, some ten or twelve miles off:—may I, in the mean time, come, and make myself agreeable here?"

"As agreeable as ever you please," said Mrs. Villiers, "and as useful too:—there stands a box of new books; and if you will open it, you may probably find something to amuse us, and repay your own trouble."

Frederick began to unpack the treasure.

"Here is The Lay of the last Minstrel," said he.—

"Of that," said Mrs. Villiers, "I heard more than of all the rest:—have you read it?"—"I have not;—but I, too, have heard its praises from every quarter."

"Sit down, then, and begin it directly," said Helena, with a pretty impatience of manner which Frederick could not help thinking became *her* extremely.

She took out her work, and Frederick began:—

"The way was long, the wind was cold;
The Minstrel was infirm and old;
His wither'd cheek, and tresses grey,
Seem'd to have known a better day:
The harp, his sole remaining joy,
Was carried by an orphan boy."

"What an interesting opening," said Frederick, with a delighted glance at his auditors, who were looking, no less pleased, at him.

"O it's magical," cried Helena.—When he came to the stanza describing the manners and habits of the feudal warriors, concluding,

"They carv'd at the meal
With gloves of steel,
And they drank the red wine thro' the helmet barr'd,"

he exclaimed.

"It 's a living picture of the heroes of other times! and the lines—how they dance along!" He read on—it grew dark. Candles were brought in, and the servant was impatiently dismissed, while they continued to read.

Soon were they all bound by the spell of poetry and romance; the ladies forgot their employments: the candles burnt to the sockets; one of them had already expired, nor could one of the party endure the interruption of ordering more.—The thunder muttered at a distance, and they felt it aid the horrors of Melrose's pile.

Frederick read:—

"I would you had been there to see,
How the light broke forth so gloriously,
Stream'd upward to the chancel roof,
And through the gall'ries far aloof.
No earthly flame blaz'd e'er so bright,
It shone like heaven's own blessed light;

And issuing from the tomb,
Shew'd the monk's cowl and visage pale;
Danc'd on the dark-brow'd warrior's mail,
And kiss'd his waving plume."

The glimmering candle now suddenly disappeared, and left them in total darkness. The next moment a flash of livid and continuous lightning played through the half-closed shutters, and showed to the whole party the curdled cheeks, and deeply interested looks of each other. A burst of thunder followed—Helena started up, crying—

" I hope Mr. Melcombe is come home!"—

" Heaven forbid he should *not*," said Frederick; " I will run to the house, however, and ascertain it."

But the rain now descended in torrents, such as are unknown but in these mountainous regions. Again the lightning flashed through the room, and both Mrs. Villiers and Helena entreated that he would not stir.

" You can do nothing for him," said

Mrs. Villiers, "if he should not be returned, and you must plunge yourself into danger, and terrify us."

"That, at least, I will not do; but I cannot help feeling great anxiety."

The storm continued to rage:—the thunder now rolled with redoubling fury from above the hills, now burst in tremendous crashes, over the roof.

"Where, where is Mr. Melcombe?" cried Mrs. Villiers.

Frederick looked out, and, at the moment, a forked flash struck, full in his view, on a house at some distance. After an hour of terror, in which their own danger had, by far, the smallest share, the storm abated, and Frederick flew, rather than ran, to Mr. Melcombe's. He was not at home. Fearful of returning with such alarming tidings to his friends, he remained watching for Mr. Melcombe, with a degree of apprehension which he could scarcely support. Mrs. Villiers shortly sent inquiries, which he was under a necessity of answering. Still all hoped

that Mr. Melcombe had remained safely at the inn, on observing the approach of the storm; but their fearful uncertainty on this point deprived them of sleep.

Frederick thought not for a moment, of going to bed. At the first dawn of light, he took his horse, and set off in search of his friend. When he reached the house,—

"Is Mr. Melcombe here?"—he inquired of the first person he saw. This was a maid servant who could speak nothing but Welsh. "No Sasnie"—was all her answer. He alighted, and entering the house, called loudly for the landlord. Being informed that he was above with Mr. Melcombe, he proceeded eagerly towards the upper apartments, and met Mr. Melcombe coming out from a chamber door. A peculiar solemnity was diffused over his countenance. With uplifted hands, and in a tone of mingled pity and horror, he uttered these few words:—

"He is gone to his account, and may God be merciful to him!"—then gave his

hand in silence to Frederick, who affectionately receiving it, exclaimed,

"My dear Sir, we have been for many hours, in unspeakable alarm on your account: this tremendous war of the elements——"

"Has not touched me," said Mr. Melcombe; I scarcely noticed it 'till that dreadful moment - - - - but I cannot yet speak of it—let us now return home. I am truly sorry for the alarms I have occasioned—yet is was impossible, my dear friend, to avoid it, as, I am sure, you will feel, when I have told you all. But the scene has so shattered my nerves, that I wish to procure some repose (I have not been in bed all night) before I go over it again, in relating it to you."—

In a few hours afterwards, Mr. Melcombe, accompanied by Frederick, went to Mrs. Villiers's.—He was welcomed by her offered hand, and that of her daughter, while their every word and look expressed "the cares all, and fears all" of faithful and anxious friendship.—

"It is a selfish feeling to express," said Mr. Melcombe, "but it is almost an happiness to have an occasion of drawing forth so much kind solicitude,"—and his lips touched each friendly hand which had been extended to congratulate his safety.—"My dear friends," said he, seating himself between the ladies, "I have kept the story of my terrific night, 'till we were all assembled, that I might relate it once; and no more.—You are to know, then, that I was yesterday summoned by the desire of Mr. Lloyd the apothecary—to attend a person, who, he said, was certainly very near his end, and for whom he could do nothing more in respect to this world, nor could he prevail upon him to listen to a single consideration that concerned the next. The person in question had ridden at full speed to the inn, on a strong horse, which, however, was apparently almost foundered. The man, whose blood was in a very heated state, both from the violence of his exercise, and from having drunk freely of spirits, was immediately

taken ill, and had since been, at times, delirious. The apothecary had called at the inn accidentally about a week after his first seizure, and had humanely attended, and prescribed for him. He had also attempted to reason down the fury of his impatience; but, perceiving that both reasonings, and prescriptions, failed, he thought it but an act of common humanity to make known his unhappy case to me.—I, of course, set forward to attend him as soon as possible. When I reached the place, I inquired immediately for the unhappy man, whom I had been summoned to attend. I found him in a high fever; and in his hagard countenance, distinctly read the characters of death. At the sight of me, he became outrageous, crying out—'They have sent for that black coat 'to frighten me out of the few senses I 'have left.'

"'Compose yourself, my friend,' said I; 'I am not come to frighten, but to 'comfort you;—but, if you are thus impa'tient, you will defeat every chance of be-

'nefit from your medicines, as well as lose 'the consolations which I might afford you 'in your preparations for another world, 'should it be the will of God to take you 'out of this. Let me feel your pulse—I 'fear you have heightened your fever by 'this vehemence.'

"He would scarcely hear me to the end —and rejected all my remonstrances, with expressions too dreadful to repeat.—The landlord whispered me that he was sure he had something very bad upon his conscience, by many words which he had used in his ravings. I availed myself of this hint; and, advising the landlord to withdraw, I laid before the unhappy wretch the pressing and awful necessity of repentance, and the eternal benefit that might accrue from a free confession of his offences, to one whose profession it was to point out the means of expiating such offences both by contrition and faith. He looked fiercely at me:—

"'That is as much as to say, you see 'rogue in my face:—well, you are not

'much mistaken for once, Mr. Parson; but 'if I am so far gone as you all say, why 'then I shall be put into a d—'d black box, 'and there will be an end.'

"I shuddered at this full discovery of the state of his mind, and paused for some minutes to consider in what manner I should assail a heart so much more deeply sunk in depravity, than any one that I had ever encountered before.

"I endeavoured by every argument I could remember, or devise, to satisfy him of the truth of a future state, and a judgment to come;—for a long time in vain—at length, however, I struck him with something like conviction,—but this was of little avail—for he then, with the most dreadful expressions, pronounced against himself, that if there were indeed to be an eternity of punishments—he was inevitably a subject for their direst extremes; at the same time, stiffly refusing to *disgrace* himself, as he called it, by confessing even to *me*, the fearful catalogue, as I began to perceive it was, of his transgressions.—He

now called vehemently for drink, or, as he termed it, for 'something good.'—I summoned the landlord—who, by my advice, gave him nothing but simple, or diluted liquids.

"At length—the storm which so terrified you, my dear friends, began to mingle in the Heavens:—and—as I stood contemplating the miserable object before me, and vainly alluring him from guilty despair, to penitence and hope, a stream of vivid lightning darted on the unfortunate being in his bed,—touching no one besides. He gave a hideous yell at the stroke; and, trying to raise himself, fell back again—when it was evident that the use of one side was gone. I remained, for some moments, unable to speak—but, after having internally poured out the tribute of my thanks to HIM who had spared my life, I, at length, once more, addressed the unhappy offender, (who, to my humble apprehension, appeared to be called by punishment to the beginning of repentance) and at once supplicated, and charged him,

by every attribute of the supreme God—and by every terror of the realms of darkness, to seize the few moments that remained to *him*, and confess to me what was now burdening his mind; that he might enable me to pray for the acceptance of his remorse.

" 'Well, then,' said he, at last, in a feeble, and hollow voice, 'if there 's nothing else for it, I may as well confess.' After a long pause, he began:—

" 'I was an unlucky chap, from the beginning—stole what I could catch from my school-master, and let other boys be flogged for it—then I got to gambling, and cheating, and—— but the first thing I did that will send me to——"

" 'Hush,' cried I; 'in the name of Christianity I implore you to express yourself humbly, and decently:—your confession will else avail you nothing.'

" 'Well, then!—the first great sin that ever I committed—or rather the first collection of sins—was—first, enticing away from a good, honest, plain couple,

'the only two children they had in the 'world; and then, teaching the son to 'ruin himself with gambling, and cheating, 'as I had done myself; and, last of all, 'leaving the daughter ill in bed, with *my* 'child in her arms, and *not a guinea in her* '*pocket*, to beg her bread, or come to worse 'mischief still!'—'Was not her name 'Rose Woodland?' said I." Mr. M.'s auditors clasped their hands in horror at this idea, which had also just struck on their own minds.

"He continued—'It *was*,' said he, staring wildly upon me—'but how did 'you find it out?'—'I will tell you when 'you have finished your story,'—said I— 'go on—you were detected in *coining*, as 'well as cheating;—what became of you 'after that?'

"'What! do you know *that*, too?' asked he—'are you a conjurer, or a d—l?'

"'Neither,' said I:—'go on.'—He did so;—but detailed such a horrible succession of depraved and nefarious actions, as I will not shock your ears with repeating

—'At last,' he continued, 'after some 'paltry attempts, I took *to the road* in 'good earnest:—many hair-breadth scapes 'I had; and, among them, was that which 'brought me here: I had been running 'before my pursuers about six hours, at 'the full speed of my horse, when he 'foundered, and I took shelter at this 'house. I had gallopped off from an inn 'on the road, where I had heard a gen-'tleman's servant whisper to some one 'that he thought he knew me, and was 'sure he knew that watch that hangs there, '(pointing towards it,) and which, I, like 'a fool, had kept possession of, and now 'pulled out in the bar.' And then, the irreclaimable wretch began to laugh, saying that he had taken it from a fine foolish young gentleman, who let him have that, and his money too, readily enough, and then quarrelled with him for his *purse*:—and there," said Mr. Melcombe, (while his audience fixed their wondering eyes upon him,) "is *your watch*, Frederick, as I suppose you have by this time discovered that it was."

"This is a recovery which I did not indeed expect," said Frederick,—"but pray go on."

Mr. Melcombe resumed—"He had little more to say; for no humble acknowledgments, no solemn expression of penitence, could I, yet, obtain from him.

"At last, I hoped to strike him with a conviction of the goodness of God, in bringing poor Rose, after all her errors and sufferings, under your care, and protection, my dear friends; and displayed before him the awful consequences of his early sins in the melancholy fate of her father—ending their history with the consolation which they found in their short re-union; and bringing down my whole account to the time when his daughter was so happily found, and lodged in this dear asylum of indigence and misfortune. He then appeared to feel stricken, as with something which he could not readily express; and, after a violent internal struggle, exclaimed,—'Then, I have not murdered 'them *all!*—And so, poor Rose, is well,

'you say, and in good hands—and the 'baby I was such a rascal as to leave without a father——'

" 'Is in the care of those who are as a 'mother and a sister to her,' said I.—

" 'Acknowledge, then, that God is 'merciful—and in this last awful scene, 'commend your soul to his pity;—acknowledge, if but in *heart*, your past 'offences, and it may not yet be too late '—throw yourself in deep humility on the 'merits and mediation of the Redeemer of 'mankind.'

" '*May* not be too late!'—cried he, in a voice which the terrors and the pains of death combined to render scarcely articulate—'is *that all* your comfort?'

" He said no more—for convulsions now seized him, and, after many an agonizing start, and shivering pang, his unprepared soul forsook its earthly mansion.—I had just quitted the ghastly and distorted remains, when I met your anxious eyes, my dear Frederick, inquiring for me."

The relation of this fearful scene left

the whole party in a state of long, and mournful silence. It was, at length, broken by benevolent consultations respecting the gentlest method of communicating the event to Rose, and her daughter; to the former of whom it was soon afterwards revealed by letter. Rose, although she would really have recoiled from the presence of the unhappy man, yet, on receiving the tidings of his death, could not but remember her former deep, though ill requited affection: she was, moreover, severely shocked at so horrible a conclusion of a life, which, to its very latest hour, had been marked by an uninterrupted series of crimes.

CHAP. LIX.

MRS. Falkener continued to amend, and her friends welcomed her to returning health by their visits and attentions—as did her neighbours and acquaintance, who, on the authority of Mrs. Villiers, had long since begun to honour her with their countenance.

Frolick having now happily recovered from the complaint in his eyes, Frederick petitioned Helena for a renewel of the indulgence of her company in a ride.

"You will please to invite Mr. Melcombe to join us, then," said Helena, "for he has never once proposed it himself since you so politely insinuated to him that you wished him to stay at home."

"Well, I will admit him this evening," said Frederick, laughing;—and immediately ran home to make known the gracious indulgence.

In the evening, then, they all sallied forth, and had been, for some miles length, gaily, and affectionately entertaining each other, when, returning homeward, they met, trotting along, upon a little Welsh poney, the landlord of the inn, at which the unfortunate subject of the last Chapter bad breathed his last.

The landlord approached Mr. Melcombe with profound respect; and doffing his hat, broke out with—" Cot safe your reference, I hope your honour's reference took no efils nor mischiefs from the pat night you hat at my house, look you; I am mighty clat to see your reference aproat again, and I hope you are not the worse for your cootness, and your charities, and your benefolences."

" Not at all the worse, I thank you, good landlord; I performed nothing more than my duty—and I sincerely wish that my endeavours may not totally have failed in the object I had in view."

" Cot knows, Sir, the man was—with humble submission to your reference and

the laty,—the piggest knafe, and rogue, and fillain, that effer I saw in all Monmouthshire."

When the landlord had passed on, "That fellow," said Mr. Melcombe, "is a character—and one who, at any other moment than that at which I visited his *inn*, as he calls it, would have amused me extremely. As soon as I arrived, nearly wet through, with a heavy shower which had preceded the storm, he informed me with a countenance of sagacious importance, 'that out of all touts, and tepates, 'there would very soon be some rain.'—And when I desired to be shewn to the unhappy man, whom I went purposely to attend, he thus, with great gravity, and a profound bow, delivered his opinions:—

"'Sir, hur is a ferry profane rascal, look 'you, as effer you would wish to see. Hur 'is no more afraid of the tiffel, than hur is 'of Cot: in truth, and ferity, hur is not a 'fit person for your reference to conferce 'with, and, safing your reference's honour-

'able pressence, if I was your reference, I 'woult let hur tie, and pe tamt.'"—

It was impossible for Mr. Melcombe's lively companions to hear this extraordinary casuistry of the landlord, without laughing. A short discussion followed, on the very contracted ideas, usually entertained by low, and uneducated minds, on all subjects in which the benefit or gratification of others, is exclusively concerned.

"It is a strange and mortifying truth," said Frederick, "but the human mind really seems to require that both gratitude, and benevolence, should be *taught*."

"Why"—said Mr. Melcombe, "whether the human mind would require this intellectual discipline, if it were to associate from infancy with only three or four other minds, in a desert island, I cannot take upon me to decide;—but thus much I will say for human nature, that, in this motley world of ours, it is never put to the trial of being left to its own impulses:—for where it is not instructed in what is right, it is invariably led, or driven, by

surrounding circumstances, into what is wrong.—

"It is probable that we are not quite justifiable in the indignation which we cannot help feeling at both the manners, and principles, of the vulgar, since they derive both from a situation which we have been so fortunate as to escape, yet I fear, Frederick, that your motto and mine—will be—to the end of the chapter,

"Odi profanum vulgus, et arceo."

"I have just Latin enough to claim a share in that motto," cried Helena, and so saying, she declined the offered services of the footman who awaited her at the gate, and smilingly entrusted herself to the charge of Mr. Melcombe, whose ancient privilege it was to assist her in alighting from her palfrey.

And now was the period drawing near, which Mr. Melcombe had proposed for their excursion on the mountains.

Mrs. Falkener was nearly recovered—Frolick was to be left with her, that his

gentle paces, by giving her constant exercise of the most salutary kind, might contribute to her perfect restoration.

Helena promised her friend that she would make her, as far as possible, a sharer in their pleasures, by constantly writing her an account of their proceedings; and, within a few days, Mr. Melcombe, Mrs. Villiers, Frederick and Helena, set cheerily forward on their long-projected tour.

Letter to Mrs. FALKENER.

"*Dogelle, North Wales.*

"From this lovely spot, which I may call our first resting-place, I begin to realize my promise to my dear Matilda. We are all safe, all well, all happy. What my eyes have seen, and what my heart has felt, within these few days, has so bewildered,—I had almost said intoxicated, my senses, that I shall never have the power of arranging them, sufficiently to give you any thing like a connected account of our heavenly journey. Let it suffice you to know, that in heaven we are, yet we despair not

of again beholding you, and other valuable mortals on earth.

"Whatever tourists may have said, or written, dearest Matilda,—it is all so far inferior to the truth, that I cannot help wondering where they found the confidence to venture on a description of such a world as we have found. It must be confessed that to do it justice is impossible; but, it was not impossible to have forborne from the vain attempt.

"Early on Thursday, we left Brecknock, passed through Llanvilly, Llanyhangel Valley, and Builth, to Rhaiadergowy; where, beneath 'the moon's unwarming beam,' admiring its silver lustre on the groves, which no breath of heaven disturbed, we slowly wandered on, listening to the soft murmurs of the distant water-falls.

"On Friday, the terrific scenery of the Devil's Bridge burst upon our view; and here again, description dies in despair. *I* was very near dying also, for the effect of it on my feelings was overwhelming, and convulsive.

"We soon took leave of lovely South Wales, and entered on the more sublime, and stupendous scenery of the North.

"We have passed the foot of 'huge 'Plinlimmon;' and I write this from beneath the shelter of that still mightier wonder, the Cader Idris; which we mean to ascend in the morning. Snowdon himself is now within thirty miles of us; and, while from this surprising spot, our eyes range over woods, and lakes, and rivers, we can, at the same time, contemplate his cloud-capt head, and behold, swelling around him, mountains, which might seem to be the giant waves of some infinite ocean.

"We *have*, now, been far beyond this world, and are returned to it alive.

"We ascended Cader Idris this morning. My head still whirls, my limbs still tremble, but we are all in safety. My dear mother performed wonders. Mr. Melcombe was as careful of her, as Frederick himself of her daughter. To-morrow you

shall hear more: to-night, I can only sleep, which although ' 't is a good dulness' for me, after all my labours, would be a very bad one for my letter. Therefore, dearest Matilda, I will briefly say good night.

" Must I, too, prate of Cader Idris? I that have dared to condemn the presumption of describing any thing that I have, of late, beheld? Yet, you will be dissatisfied if I say nothing;—but, to describe!—it is indeed impossible. You must be content to learn how we attained the tremendous height, on which I can scarcely, yet, believe, that we stood.

" At eight in the morning, we began our journey. My mother, and myself, mounted, on two little scrambling ponies, were preceded by two guides, with our pelisses, and some cold provisions; attended, each, by a watchful Knight-errant, walking by our side. The first three miles are of easy ascent; but, about the fourth, my palpi-

tations began; and when I found that my horse was winding round the mountain's edge, his head rising perpendicularly before me, and the whole world lessening beneath my feet, the idea that my mother was following me, through such perilous ways, doubled all my terrors:—she, at the same instant, seized with a similar panick, at my situation, uttered a faint shriek, which deprived me of all self-possession; my head began to swim, and my hands to lose their power.—Frederick, instantly perceiving this, suddenly stopt my horse, and, while he supported me on his arm, assured me, with a face as pale as ashes, that my mother was safe. He assisted me in dismounting: my mother alighted also, and we, then, each leaning on the arm of her companion, slowly pursued our way, amidst the rocks which thronged the summit of the mountain: this, at length we reached; and found to be a space which would not contain twelve persons crowded together. A little wall of stones formed a helpless fence against the hideous precipice beneath.

On this pinnacle, we sat down, I trembling in every joint, with 'wonder, love, and 'fear,' and each heart among us, I am well persuaded, pouring out its silent adoration.

"After some moments, 'Hither,' said Mr. Melcombe, 'would I lead an atheist, 'if such an one there be; *here* bid him 'cast around his eyes, and *then* demand of 'him whether he dare to disbelieve a God.'

"Far below the three vast points of Cader Idris, we beheld lakes, so still, so black, that thoughts of Heaven were insensibly subdued into reflections on the fabled Avernus, and its dreary realms. Frederick, whose spirits on this delightful excursion, have been constantly on the wing, fell into so deep a rumination over one of these dismal lakes, that I beheld a new character in his countenance; after some minutes, he made a gesture of awe-struck astonishment, and turned his eyes, in silence, from the view.

"But, let me now, my Matilda, make a sudden change of scene.

"Imagine us, at once, returned from our aërial journey, and securely enjoying the comforts of a social repast, enlivened by a simple minstrel of 'the olden time,' crowned with silver hairs, and 'discours-'ing most excellent musick' on a native harp.

"He looked as if born to live, and play, and die in Dolgelle: yet, what a pity that any one should ever die here at all!

"Our dear old Harper attended us also, at supper. One of his sweet airs most particularly enchanted us all. He called it *Twll in ei bock*; literally, *Hole in the cheek*. 'Anglice, dimple,' said Mr. Melcombe.—'*Ecce signum*,' said Frederick, glancing his impertinent eye on me.

"I am just informed, that the post will go off in a few minutes; and so I am resolved, shall this epistle, lest it should never come to an end.

"We depart hence to-morrow morning.

I could weep to leave this place, but we have so many wonders yet to see!

"Our ancient minstrel has given us his farewell strain.

"We asked him by what name it was called; his answer to our inquiry was in Welsh; which he translated 'Loth to 'part.' I felt it as truly a compliment, from an heart which beat with warm feelings, though in the bosom of a minstrel of sixty-five.

"Adieu, my dear Matilda, 'till we reach our next resting-place.

"Here, there, and every where,

"Yours,

"HELENA VILLIERS."

"*Barmouth.*

"We saw more, much more, at sweet Dolgelle than I shall ever find time, or method, to tell you, 'till we meet;—but as *this* is now our resting-place, and will so continue for some time, I think you have rather a better chance of hearing

what great designs we execute from hence.

"The road from Dolgelle to this place, is so fearfully, so grotesquely wild, that passing it has been said to be like passing through the fragments of a demolished world. In this spot, also, the same Genius presides, and I do nothing but wish myself Salvator Rosa for its sake. Barmouth hangs on the side of a rocky mountain, and creeps down to the very edge of the sea, from the incursions of which, a low parapet wall kindly preserves the bottom of the village. On one side of us, rocks that brave the skies, hang over our heads. In parts, they are almost inaccessible, save to the pretty white goats that bound among their steeps, and which, while we are admiring them, we cannot help fearing, every moment, to see precipitated to the bottom.

"We have made several excursions by water, as well as by land.—In one of these, we sailed amidst the rocks, a distance of about five miles to a place called

Ponte Dû, and here, rising behind a simple bridge, of one arch, we looked up to a most stupendous height, from which four or five water-falls burst furiously down, amidst rich woods, and jutting cliffs.

" Through these woods, with great fatigue, and difficulty, we climbed—and were rewarded with a display of all that was varied, and contrasted of Nature's assembled beauties.

" Amongst ' these her glorious works,' we beheld groups of spreading trees, thrown into the most lovely diversities of form, over grass of the freshest verdure, so closely trimmed by the mountain sheep, that you might fancy yourself in the midst of grounds, highly cultivated by human taste.

" From the habitable beauty, and attractive sweetness, of this place, I entitled it the Forest of Arden. We left it with regret, and, after a ramble of some hours, returned home to a late dinner, and had a *dessert* of Shakespear.

"On the following day, we had a no less delightful excursion, to Garth yn Arawd—which, translated, means, a promontory, poetically celebrated.—It met our view, peeping out upon the edge of the sea;—and a little white cottage greeted us on our landing, situated in the midst of a meadow of emerald green.—Far above its head, rises a majestic wood of oaks:—on its right, a smaller wood hangs over a lovely rivulet, which babbles in its beauteous course from the towering mountain-top down to the very ocean.

"On another side, the dark grey rock with its black apertures, hangs high in the air, over the gloomy water-lake beneath—deeply darkened by its tremendous shadow.

"But what nonsense all this appears when I look around me!—how inadequate the words!—how impotent the attempt!—I will say no more; but merely give you these cobweb threads, to weave into something by which you may possibly catch hold of the character of this terres

trial Paradise. For the present, dear Matilda, I must leave you.

"I am summoned to an evening walk: —Oh that you could see that moon rising over our dark brown, grey, blue, black, cliffs!—How often do I wish that you could have been the companion of my journey! Your absence lessens the beauty of many a scene, and often throws a passing cloud over the brightest sunshine; and when I tell you this, at such a moment, and in the deepest sincerity of my heart, you will not, I am confident, doubt of my affection. In some of the kinder visions of fancy, I behold these scenes again, with the addition of your society ere yet the 'life of life is fled;'—but Frederick calls again;—farewell."

Third Letter.

"*Bala.*

"Three weeks have elapsed, since I dispatched my last letter. Within that time, I have seen Harlech Castle—been

half drowned—left Barmouth—passed through the vale of Festiniog—and climbed up to the top of Snowdon.—And now, having told you, an hundred times, that I cannot describe what these regions present, I need not, you know, attempt to fill up the above outline, but leave the task to your own imagination, 'till we meet at least; and then, I may try whether I can talk, any better than I can write.

"But you may possibly be a little inquisitive respecting my drowning. And this is a most propitious day for the purpose of satisfying your curiosity; for the lake which fronts my windows looks black, and stormy. The fisherman sits on the rock, waiting for the cessation of the wind; the clouds wrap up the heads of the distant mountains, and veil all their glories from our eyes; and pleasure, and comfort, dwell in 'hanging o'er the ingle.'—

"So, now, to begin with Harlech, and come to my drowning in due order.—Our boat, and a fair wind, took us very safely to Harlech, situated on the Bay of Cardi-

gan. The original castle, (for most of that now standing, was added to it, by Edward I.) was founded A. D. 552, by Maelgwnn Gwnedd—I am very thankful that I have not a brother of that name!—have you spelt it out yet?—It is—(the castle I mean,—not Maelgwnn Gwnedd that was) founded on a very high, bold, rock, projecting into the Irish Sea. From its marvellous height, we beheld the whole Bay of Cardigan, lying out-stretched beneath us, and, afar off, the aspiring summits of Cader Idris, and Snowdon, to the South and to the North. In 1468 it was taken by the Earl of Pembroke. It was once the shelter of Margaret of Anjou, and once it was seized by Owen Glendower. Its outside is more perfect than any edifice of this description that I have seen; but, the interior apartments are difficult to be traced; yet, altogether, it conveys a full idea of the gloomy grandeur of the ancient British castle.

"In these wild, and savage scenes, we met with an accommodation which we little

expected — nothing less than some very neat, kid gloves, made by an inhabitant of the village.

" After wandering, and admiring, a considerable time, we re-entered our boat, and were returning, triumphantly, and very gaily, homeward, when a sudden change of wind drove the sail full against the spot where I sat; yet would it not have reached me, had I possessed wisdom enough to sit still; but, in starting back to avoid the blow which I expected from the sail, I lost my balance, and fell into the water. Frederick was taking a farewell view of Harlech Castle, when he heard me plunge—looked round, and, as you already anticipate, directly plunged after me. As for the rest, I can remember little of what I felt after the first moment when the ocean seemed to bury me beneath its weight.

" By the assistance of Mr. Melcombe, and the boatmen, we were very soon both safe in the vessel again. Nothing could equal the terrors of Frederick, except those of my mother: I suffered a good deal from

the wet coldness of my apparel, but being consigned to a warm bed, as soon as I reached home, have felt no further inconvenience. Did I, could I, require an additional tie to bind my heart to Frederick? —Certainly not;—yet Fate seems, by every incident of life, to strengthen the sacred bond of gratitude, and affection."

A pause of some days.—

"I resume my pen, to inform you that, on leaving Barmouth, we proceeded immediately to Tan-y-Bwlch, in the vale of Festiniog. You have, I know, read what Lord Lyttelton has written of it; you may hear what all the world will say of it; but you can never know what I think of it, 'till I learn some language which comprises all the descriptive powers of those already known, with ten million times more force and eloquence, than they all possess. I have not the least doubt but it is a part of Heaven which slipt down on one of the highest mountains, and so rolled on to this

spot. Here we slept one night, vowing to sleep here for many others, ere we 'sleep 'with our fathers.'

"The next day we went to Caernarvon, and, the following morning, we ascended Snowdon.—When we reached the summit, we were lost in clouds, and the whole beauteous creation beneath our feet, was totally hidden from our sight, as by a dark and impenetrable curtain. Great, as you may believe, was our disappointment; but we had not long recovered breath to bewail it, or power to look around us, before the curtain was withdrawn. The sun threw its full radiance on the world below, and such a view of boundless beauty and sublimity, was spread before our eyes, as will, never, never, leave my mind!

"Mr. Melcombe, pressing his hands together, with a countenance of holy rapture, exclaimed—'Let there be light, and 'there was light!'

"We looked down on the most tremendous mountains, whose height, to look up to, would make one tremble.

"This is all I can, all I dare, to write of Snowdon.

"When we had, once more, reached its base, we reposed, for two whole days, at our inn; then set off for Conway,—passed the mighty Penmanmawr—proceeded through Llanrwyst, &c. the whole road leading through woods, over rocks, and along the sweetest streams, and rivers, with cataracts on every side:—but of cataracts I must talk, for I cannot write; nor did I know what the meaning of the word was, 'till within this wonderful week. I have now seen them from six feet to above 200 in height, pouring down in foaming majesty in a thousand different forms, from precipices that rose above the clouds.

"There I was interrupted to take a ramble with Frederick. We had scarcely left the house, when a mountain-savage brought us a pretty little leveret, which, he said, had been nursed up ever since May, and was very fat, and *fit for eating*.

Upon this *tender* recommendation, we bought him immediately, and travelled about three miles, towards a steep mountain,—ascended it,—and, under a thick furze, deposited the trembling little animal. Poor, pretty fellow! a heavy rain to-night will both wet and affright you!—but you are safe from *man!*

"The days have stolen on, Matilda, and I have not yet finished my letter. I have obtained my dear mother's leave to send you a few lines, which, at the same time, she chooses to pronounce, not worth sending. They came, however, from her *heart*, in a pensive hour, when she had wandered out alone;—but, I shall not speak my opinion of them, since my partiality for the author, may make you fancy that you have a right to dispute my judgment.

"I love to climb the black, impending steep,
Which hangs its frowning terrors o'er the deep;
To mark how wild its shaggy points arise,
Defy the reach of man, and pierce into the skies.

While on its brow dark storms, and tempests, lour,
My nerves, in trembling tumult, own its power.—
Dread cliff! in whose proud height I seem to see
Earth's only barrier 'twixt my God and me.
On scenes like these my swimming eyes I close,
And seek, in softer shades, my mind's repose,—
Where the green wood shall yield its mossy seat,
And the wild streamlet dimple at my feet;
There watch the blushing morn descend, and guide
Her shifting radiance down the mountain's side,
Illum'd with tender light, or gaily beam
A checquer'd splendour on the dancing stream;
Or, rushing from the mountain's awful head,
The dashing torrent seek its craggy bed;
Mark, on the verdant hill, the snow-white flock
Sport on the brink of some loose hanging rock;
The wild goats sudden bound from hill to dale,
Their white beards waving in the passing gale;
The sportive squirrel leap from tree to tree,
Careless—nor dreading loss of liberty;
Safe rove the wanton bird, and timid hare,
Far from the murderous gun, or treacherous snare;
And all enjoy the bliss by Nature given,
Freedom their native right, their guardian Heaven.
Here let me rest,—the works of mercy scan,
And lose the cares, the crimes, the woes of man.
Here Disappointment may forget her sting,
And Hope for future worlds extend her wing:
Here, all-creative fancy may impart
Some joy to cheer the desolated heart;
Here bleeding memory may pause awhile,
And from dear Nature steal one transitory smile."

"My mother did not know the story of our poor leveret, when she wrote of his security.

"And now, dear Matilda, I must say Good bye, for the last time, before I shall say, How d'ye do?—and I can faithfully assure you that, nothwithstanding all the beauties, and glories, I leave behind, I shall most sincerely rejoice, when the happy hour of our meeting arrives.

"Yours, most affectionately,

"HELENA VILLIERS."

CHAP. LX.

It was near the end of October when the four friends returned to their beloved village, after having accomplished a most delightful excursion, in which they had enjoyed all that high-wrought gratification which sublime scenery, and the most indulgent weather of the finest season of the year, are capable of bestowing on minds of taste and feeling, all united by congeniality, and two of them by mutual love.

They found Mrs. Falkener perfectly well, and perfectly happy. Mrs. Villiers declared herself so much revived and strengthened, that she had not, for many a year, felt such positive enjoyment of existence as at that time.

Mr. Melcombe triumphed in the happy success of his long-treasured project; and, as to our lovers—truly and deeply as they had long been attached, they whispered to themselves, (nay, Frederick who had set

the example, contrived that they should whisper to *each other)*—that by this long, and happy intermingling of hearts, sentiments, and converse, they loved more dearly than ever.

One morning, when he had accompanied Mr. Melcombe to the favourite resort of both—is it necessary to add that this was the dwelling of Mrs. Villiers?—Frederick, having enticed his Helena from the rest of the party—

"Dear Helena," said he, as they slowly paced through the walks of the shrubbery, "how I do love this little garden!"

"So do I, Frederick;—but why *particularly?*"

"Because it was, for years, the scene of our childish frolicks, and has been latterly that of our dearer delights—conversations, readings, walkings——"

"Possibly I, too, may love it a little the better for all this."

"O, Helena! I cannot, will not doubt, but that this dread of my father's disapprobation, which has too often veiled the

sun of happiness from my eyes, will pass away like a morning cloud, and leave me rejoicing in the brightness of meridian day."

Then, pressing the hand of his beloved to his lips, he returned with her to the parlour, whence he had stolen her away.

"Well, Mr. Beaumont," said Mr. Melcombe, rising, and laying his hand smilingly, on Frederick's shoulder, "are you ready to make your bow?—I believe our dinner hour draws near."

"Is it possible?" cried Frederick, plucking out his watch.

At that moment the servant entered with a letter for Mr. Melcombe, and, having delivered it, left the room.

Mr. Melcombe, glancing his eye on the cover of the letter, changed countenance, and sat down again.—"It is from India!" said he.

Frederick sat down also, and, panting for breath, threw himself backward in the chair.

"Yet—it cannot be in answer, Sir——"

"Yes, it may," said Mr. Melcombe, "it is come overland"—and tearing open the letter, gave one from within to Frederick, and began to read his own.

The hands of Frederick shook with agitation. He had scarcely power to break the seal.

"Read with me,"—said he to Helena, who had sunk on a chair by his side.

Mrs. Villiers, with a palpitating heart, fixed her eyes upon Frederick's face. She saw him smile, and catch the hand of Helena to his heart.

"All is well, then,"—said she internally. But she continued to watch them both,—and, in a few moments, saw them drop the letter, and fall into each other's arms in a burst of grief. She turned in agony towards Mr. Melcombe for an explanation. She beheld a countenance full of sympathizing sorrow, and received from his hand the open letter which Mr. Beaumont had addressed to him.

It was this:—

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I received yesterday a welcome packet from your friendly hand. Your kind solicitude on my son's account, induces me to believe that you would wish me to proceed immediately to the interesting subject of your letter. I write to Frederick nearly to the same purport as to yourself.

"I will confess to you, my good friend, that my views for my son have been very ambitious, and, consequently, that I was sensible of a severe disappointment on reading his so earnestly expressed wishes, amounting almost to *determination*—touching the choice which he has made. Yet, his lofty commendations of the object of that choice, so strongly ratified by your mature judgment, had a most powerful influence on my mind—and I am not so wedded to riches, even in this wealth-admiring country, as coldly to reject the warm solicitations of an only son, for my sanction to what he assures me comprises all his hopes of earthly happiness.

" But—at the same time, having conceded thus far in a point on which I had entertained expectations so different, I, also, have something to claim from him. Though my present situation is lucrative, it has not been always so, and you well know that expenditure is, here, equally habitual with acquisition: now, although I might reasonably hope that a very few years will restore me to my own country, in affluence and comfort, yet, I cannot expect to be enabled to support my son, with an unportioned wife, with a separate establishment, or, such a one at least, as I should wish to see him enjoy. But, with those who regulate affairs in this country, I possess considerable influence; and I have such plans in preparation for his arrival here, (where you well know that I spent all my best years for his advantage,) as would, I have little doubt, produce to himself, and his lady elect, an ample, and, eventually, a splendid fortune; while, at the same time, as you will easily perceive, I

should thus be, myself, the sooner at liberty to return to my native home.

"On the condition of joining me in this place, then, I give him my full consent to marry his beloved Helena, and the sooner the better;—I shall be impatient to see my son, and proud of such a daughter as you describe to me. Tell her that if she will, as I cannot permit myself to doubt,—accompany her happy husband to this luxurious land, she will, if possible, command more homage than in her native country.

"If, on the contrary, my son, or Miss Villiers, should object to this proposal, *I* must object also, and most decisively declare, that, on no other terms whatever, can my concurrence be obtained;—and furthermore, that I have affairs of consequence in Vienna, for the dispatch of which, I should, in that case, require of Frederick to shew himself in that city.

"This step, however, should, most assuredly, be dispensed with, in the event of his acquiescence in my proposal. Other-

wise, as I have apprised him, (with full directions respecting the business in question,) it is my particular desire that he would set out for Germany as soon as conveniently he may.

" With the sincerest gratitude for your long, and unremitted cares,

" I remain, my dear friend,

" Your's, very sincerely,

" AUGUSTUS BEAUMONT."

While Mrs. Villiers was running her impatient eye over this epistle, no word interrupted her attention :—the lovers remained lost in affliction, and Mr. Melcombe had left the room.

She had just concluded the perusal of the letter, when she heard her daughter whisper, in a voice suffocated with sobs,

" You well know it is impossible for me to leave her."

Frederick's reply was—

" No, my life !—I dare not ask it."

" My dear children," cried Mrs. Villiers, rising, and throwing her arms around them both, " is it *I* who am to obstruct your

happiness? Heaven forbid the thought! —Where can you go, my Helena, that I will not go with you?—east, or west, north, or south, are alike to me."—Frederick answered only by showering kisses upon her hand:—but Helena, raising her streaming eyes to her mother's face, exclaimed— "You reside in India, my dearest mother! —*You* who could not support the heat of a London spring!"—Then throwing her head despairingly on the shoulder of Frederick, she cried,

"No, Frederick, the die is cast: the hovering cloud has burst—and we must part."—Again—after a pause filled up with tears, "But our hearts shall separate never, never, never:" and she gave herself to his tender endearments, as if to soften the cruel sentence she was obliged to pronounce.

Frederick suffered agonies such as may, in some measure, be imagined, from the general enthusiasm of his character, and from the high-wrought ecstacy of love, and hope, in which this fatal blow had

found his mind. His noble heart throbbed with its own anguish, bled over the tender grief of his Beloved, and yet hoped it could not equal his;—and almost insensibly, his heart repeated,

"——There is no woman's sides,
Can bide the beating of so strong a passion,
As love doth give my heart."—

"Heaven grant it may be so!" said he internally:—she could not *long* endure what I do now!"

Mrs. Villiers, having in vain reiterated a thousand pleadings in aid of her own generous purpose, with a mourning heart, and weeping eyes, left them awhile together, and walked out into the air, in the hope of breathing more freely. There she found Mr. Melcombe, endeavouring to collect the fortitude so needful to enable him to support and counsel his friends.—Instantly extending his hand to her,—

"How are they, my dearest friend?"—

"Oh, wretched beyond all words!" cried she—"they break my heart"—and she wept afresh, and taking Mr. Melcombe's

offered arm, walked on in silence by his side.—In a few minutes, she resumed—

"I have offered to go with them—but——"

"But what?" cried Mr. Melcombe, gasping for breath. "Helena will not hear of it!"—

"God bless her!—poor love!" said he. —The servant approaching, whispered his mistress that the dinner had been ready for some time.—"You may take it in to the dining-room then," she answered; and turning to Mr. Melcombe, "Do not go away"—said she: "we must sit down for form's sake, and possibly it will be better to interrupt them awhile."

They all then mournfully assembled, and Mrs. Villiers, availing herself of a custom, which she had frequently adopted, ordered a dumb waiter, and dismissed the attendant. Mr. Melcombe took every thing on himself, and prevailed on all his beloved friends to partake of some slight refreshment for each others' sake and for *his* sake.—

"You have done all you could for *me*," said Frederick, accepting a glass of wine from his hand with a smile of anguish. "This," continued he, "after five such weeks!"—he was nearly choked in attempting to swallow his wine.—Helena gave him a speechless look, while the tears chased each other down her face. Thus in half-uttered lamentations,—in mutual, but vague consolations from the hope of happier days,—in fruitless efforts for indifferent conversation, and in heart-felt pangs of despairing sorrow, passed slowly on this miserable day. The next, and the next, but too closely resembled it. Frederick and Helena met again, and again, to converse—to consult—to determine, as before, that Mrs. Villiers's life could not, should not, be sacrificed to their union—to bewail departed happiness,—gently to complain of mistaken ambition, to anticipate, with agony, approaching absence, and finally, to vow in youth, in age, in near companionship, or distant climes, unshaken constancy, and unalterable love.—

A fortnight thus sadly elapsed, before the afflicted Frederick Beaumont could summon resolution to address Mr. Melcombe on the subject of the approaching separation.—

"My dear friend," said he—"from my father's letter to me, I infer that I must delay this dreaded banishment no longer. I entreat you to indulge my weakness, and arrange all things for me—to depart is task enough for me." After a pause,—"How many deaths are in this word *depart!*"—Mr. Melcombe confessed that he saw too plainly the necessity of this departure, but should never have acquired sufficient courage to begin the subject; "But," he added, "since thus it must be, depend on me for every thing: I will procure you letters of introduction, and accompany you, to the furthest extent of English ground."—

Frederick wrung his hand in silence.

Another fortnight elapsed, more wretched than the last—and it was the middle of November, when the friendly exertions

of Mr. Melcombe, in cruel kindness,—brought all his preparations for the departure of Frederick to a close.—On the day before it was to take place, Mr. Melcombe informed him that he should be entirely engaged at home in various ways, and requested he would go without him to Mrs. Villiers. That tender mother wisely judged, that it would be best to leave *both* her poor children, on this last day, to the free indulgence of their sorrows.—When they were alone, some minutes elapsed in which all the eloquence of grief dwelt only in their hearts, and eyes.—At length Frederick, with a bursting sigh, and in a voice scarcely audible, was able to say—"Helena, is it come to this?"—

She answered with forced composure—"It is indeed, Frederick; and if any thing could aggravate the present affliction, it is, that, for my mother's sake, I must bury all here"—laying her hand on her throbbing heart.

"And *I*," said Frederick, "when I am gone, must also cover all in silence—for *I* shall be *alone*."—The fortitude of

Helena suddenly gave way before this mournful idea,—and she burst into an agony of tears.—He soothed—he consoled her, with a thousand tender expressions—and talked of hope,—while his heart was breaking with despair. "Helena," said he, "we shall meet again, and in a happier hour; doubt it not, my only love:—we are too closely united, to be finally separated by any stroke but—*one*."—

"O name not that," cried she,—"and I will hope all, I will do all."

"My father is not an unfeeling character," said Frederick; "I will obey him: —I will go to Vienna; but I will assail him, again, and again, with letters, supplications, prayers, that he will not crush the only hope of my youth—that he will not take from me the only object of my existence."—At length Mrs. Villiers rejoined them—wept with them—listened to the last lingering hope of the afflicted Frederick; indulged him in the flattering, though, as she thought it, *fond* idea that alone supported him; concluding with her

last injunctions, that, after his departure, he would rouse his faculties to exertion,—especially to the business which he was deputed to transact; imploring him to seek instruction, wherever it might be found and even, sometimes," to force himself into scenes of amusement.—"I need not charge you to remember the friends you have left behind.—You will remember them but too well!"

Here Mr. Melcombe entered, to pass a parting hour with Mrs. Villiers, and Helena, previous to his short absence, which was to commence very early the next morning.

It was late when he took his leave—saying, "My dear Frederick, be not very long before you follow me,—and remember that to-morrow you must rise early.—In the mean time, I will wish you a good night; feeling, as I do, that, when you return, you would rather find yourself alone."

The dreadful moment at last arrived.—Frederick rose--sat down;--again, and again, embraced his only blessing—"Is it pos-

sible," he cried,—"that this is the last—last—no, it will not—cannot—shall not be."—Helena spoke not—it was impossible—nor could she—now—weep. Scarcely could she breathe.—At length, in convulsive accents, she half pronounced,

"God bless you, Frederick!"—

"Good angels keep you!"—he with difficulty articulated, "'till we meet again."—Then, pressing her to his trembling lips, and lacerated heart,—he tore himself away.

The painful journey began with the first dawn of light; and without interruption from accident, and with little variety from conversation, Mr. Melcombe, and his afflicted friend, arrived at Yarmouth, where, after a night's rest, the former, continuing his cares to the last, arranged every thing for the departure of Frederick in the packet for Tonningen. The servant, the horses, were all on board. Mr. Melcombe had attended Frederick even into the vessel; which was by this time, in preparation for sailing, when pressing the hand

of Frederick, with a heart full of anguish, he bade him adieu; charging him to write punctually—and to look resolutely forward to happier days.—

Frederick put into his hand a letter for Helena; then wringing that friendly hand once more,—"Farewell, my dearest friend,"—cried he, "a thousand thousand thanks for all—say every thing for me:—bless them both:—it is my last and now my only—charge."—Then by a violent effort, he suppressed the rising emotions 'till Mr. Melcombe was lost to his view, and, with him, all that remained of Helena, and England.

CHAP. LXI.

Mr. Melcombe's solitary journey homewards soon came to an end. He went immediately to Mrs. Villiers's. The grief-stricken Helena was alone in her apartment. When she heard that he was arrived, an universal tremor seized her. She felt as if he were returned from the funeral of Frederick:—

"Yet, it is not *that!*" said she to herself;—"No—Heaven be praised—it is not that!"—and summoning all the strength of her mind, to the aid of her trembling frame, she slowly descended. She entered the parlour with assumed composure;—but raising her eyes to those of Mr. Melcombe, and reading in them the friendly sympathy which brought the very image of Frederick fully to her view, she lost all self-command,—and as he approached to meet her, threw herself in speechless grief into his arms.—He held

her to his heart, with the tenderness of a father,—controlling, as much as possible, his own emotions, for her sake; then, placing her gently on a chair, seated himself beside her, and by every soothing, every pitying art, endeavoured to still her agitations, and whisper hope, and peace, to her mind. He concluded his friendly pleadings, by reminding her of what her mother would suffer in seeing her overwhelmed with sorrow.

"The sacrifice you have made to her, my sweet girl," said he, "Heaven sees, and will reward—hard, indeed, is the sacrifice, but it is worthy of you, by struggling yet a little further, to make it complete."

"O, I *will* struggle to deserve the esteem, the tenderness, of such a mother—to be worthy of your friendship—of——"

"Of Frederick's love"—said Mr. Melcombe, catching the words which died on her lips—"and here," said he, "is his latest remembrance of you—and yet not absolutely so; for the last words he uttered

as we parted, were to bless you both."—Then, putting the letter of Frederick within her hands, he pressed them affectionately between his own,—and left her to the sad indulgence of those feelings which he well knew, it would again call forth from her heart.

FREDERICK'S *Letter to* HELENA.

" *Yarmouth, Eleven at Night.*

" Helena!—at length I have escaped from Mr. Melcombe!—*escaped* from my honoured, my dearest friend!—Such is the state of my mind!—yet, to-morrow, when he is departed, how much worse will it be with me!—Strangers—beings who know not thee—will be my companions. I scarcely know where I am,—nor how I came hither:—nor can I believe that every hour, and every movement, take me further from you—when, oh when to return! —and how to return—to Helena, and the fulness of bliss?—or to solitude, and lingering wretchedness?—Heaven spare

my senses!—for the thought of losing you for ever is—I had almost said—death;—but if I *must* thus lose you, death will be my only friend.

"How am I prating of my own sufferings, while I know that tender heart is pierced with pity for them—nay more—do I not know that with its pity are mingled the bitter regrets of affection?

"Dear, ingenuous angel!—have you not confessed it? and shall I not cherish the confession?—while,—strange contrariety!—when I reflect on the anguish it must now occasion to you, it is, at the same time, the keenest of my sorrows. I would die to save you a moment's pain; yet the love which creates your pain I would not forego for millions!—Bear with me—my Helena!—with my selfishness—my inconsistencies:—all—all spring from the exhaustless source of love—love which you alone have inspired—or ever could have inspired in me. Many are amiable—many engaging—but you, and only you, are mine—can be mine—must be mine—

for I will not *yet*—no, Helena, I have not *courage* to despair of possessing you.

"Something,—I know not what,—but something I trust, I hope, I pray, shall yet unite us. In the mean time, I go—an exile from you,—dreading all I have to see—all I have to do;—but, above all, dreading what you may have to suffer; not for my sake only, but from sickness, from accident—from a thousand, thousand ills which I hourly anticipate, for my own torment. Yet, once again, let me speak of hope, my Helena, and end with it, that I may leave it, with my heart, and my soul, in your possession:—those you can never lose, and I charge you—my beloved, lose not the first.

"Tell your dear, your invaluable mother, that I live but in hope of being your's and her's;—and now, lest I relapse into the language of despondency, farewell, farewell! Write to me, my only love! Mr. Melcombe will take charge of your letters—balmy comforters to the bleeding heart of your for ever devoted

"FREDERICK BEAUMONT."

Mrs. Villiers found her daughter drowned in tears—" O, my sweet Helena," she exclaimed—" this is more than I can bear.—For me—for me—you have resigned the sweetest hope of earthly happiness that ever filled two kindred hearts;—and to view these afflicting consequences is death to me:—better, far better had it been to have set my health, my life on the hazard, than to behold your blooming youth a prey to the canker-worm that now devours it."

" Speak not of it, my *dearest* mother,—you shall see no more of this:—yet—look at this letter!—but I will read it no more this day—I will, indeed I will, call forth all the strength of my *weakness*"—forcing a smile—" for your sake.—After a little time, you shall see how cheerful I will be,"—and she burst into fresh tears.

" O thou sweet blessing of my life," cried her mother, folding her in her arms—" dearest—only earthly consolation of thy widowed mother's heart."

CHAP. LXII.

The wind was fair—the prow cut its rapid way through the opening seas.—Frederick retreated alone to the head of the ship, and, mournfully hanging over it, watched the dashing foam, and was ready to chide the guiltless bark that bore him so swiftly away. In a few days, he landed at Tonningen; and following the track which Mr. Melcombe had marked out for him, as the most secure from the hostile interruption of the French,—he proceeded in a post-chaise—his own horses, with his servant, attending him as long as it was possible: he then left them, with orders to follow him to Segonberg, in the duchy of Holstein. The Danish postillions conveyed him along with tolerable alacrity, and it was his wish to proceed with as much rapidity as possible. The quickness of the motion seemed to abate somewhat of the intenseness of reflection; yet not sufficiently to permit him to

feel curiosity, or care, respecting external objects;—and often would he cast a vacant glance over the new and changing scenery through which he passed. The first object that roused him to observation, was the inn to which he was driven, in the small neat town of Segonberg:—the moment he alighted, he perceived that it resembled an English farm-house;—but the discovery gave him not more of pleasure than of pain. The apathy of the German postillions, and the slowly measured pace, by which he was dragged through the sandy roads, threw him again on himself, and gave him too much leisure to meditate on all he had left behind. Yet there were times when he would cling so fondly to these remembrances, that he found a luxury in being at liberty to dwell on them;—when, again, the dreadful idea that Helena might be lost to him for ever, would come over him, fraught with such unmitigated anguish, that he would stop the carriage, call for his horse, which had now no difficulty in keeping up with him, and ride away at full speed, his servant usually following him.

One day, when the sun was declining towards the horizon, as he mounted Roan Barbary—by Helena so called, he felt himself so wearied with the sight of human faces in which he had no concern, that he rode away alone, ordering his servant to wait with the carriage for him at the next stage. He watched the route they took, and left the high road, in the intention of soon returning to it, and now bent his course over a wild and barren heath, which appeared to have been equally neglected by nature, and art. A mountain rose before him, which seemed to be no less forgotten in the world, than the dreary wild below;—but, as he approached towards it, he beheld on its side the dark crumbling remains of a spacious castle. As he drew nearer, he perceived large stumps of trees, which gave sign of a surrounding forest, now no more. This scene of desolation suited too well the state of Frederick's mind to suffer him to leave it immediately. He passed through the ruined gate of the castle, and perceiving that the door-way gave him free ad-

mittance, he alighted, and tying his horse to one of the pillars, entered the gloomy mansion with the deepest impressions of melancholy," and awe.

He traversed the courts, where

> "The long grass whistled in the wind"—

and wandered among the mouldering walls, and through the extending corridors in the further part of the building. No sound but the echo of his own footsteps met his ear—'till his attention was suddenly drawn by the whirring of wings over his head—instantly succeeded by a dismal scream.

> "It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bell-man
> Which gives the stern'st good-night."

Every thing in this awful edifice was in decay. Many of the doors had been thrown down by the hand of time. One lay prostrate before the feet of Frederick, and, beyond it, gaped a darkening chasm, in which, as he approached, he discerned a winding staircase.

Curiosity impelled him to descend:—it trembled beneath his weight: a few stones

broke from under him; and, rolling down, hollowly resounded from the subterraneous bottom to which they fell.

Frederick concluded that he should soon find the dungeons, where, in past ages, misery had groaned beneath the rod of despotism; and he was not mistaken. Anxiously he visited these cells of human wretchedness; many of them now open to the light. For a moment his own sorrows gave place to soft compassion for the more hopeless misery that had been endured by others.

He stood—deeply meditating on the dire consequences of cruelty and pride;—when, through the broken walls, a livid glare from the setting sun fell upon an object which in a moment fascinated his sight. It was an human skeleton, enclosed round the waist and ancles by fetters of iron. Frederick's heart died within him. —After some minutes of painful contemplation,

"Wretched mortal!" said he, "wast thou, then, left *thus* to combat with the pangs of death?"

His eyes were still fixed upon the skeleton:—he perceived it to move:—involuntarily he started—he looked again:—an hideous reptile was crawling through it to his hiding-place. Again he examined the "bare anatomy," and discovered, within its bony grasp, a small roll of parchment. He took it—shuddering—from the hand of death. Eagerly he began to develop it:—the exterior part was half blotted, half consumed with damp;—and as he held it nearer to the light, he could just discern that what was thus decayed, was the beginning of a tale of woe. He carefully preserved what remained, and throwing his last pitying look on the ghastly remnant of suffering mortality,—left the dungeon.

He mounted his horse, and finding a sad satisfaction in the discovery that he could feel an interest in any thing but his own griefs, hastened towards the road he had left.

Dark clouds had gathered round the setting sun, and diminished his brightness

for a few moments before he reached the horizon. They now appeared full of storm—and the rain was driven by the rising wind into the face of the traveller. Frederick little heeded it—but finding the darkness increase, and being in a country entirely new to him, he felt that it would be prudent to hasten onward. He arrived before it was entirely dark, at the inn at which he had appointed his servant to attend him.

Alone in his chamber, he drew forth his scroll, and while the wind howled, and the rain dashed against the windows, he read the following

FRAGMENT.

"————I returned crowned with the laurels of victory—I laid them at the feet of Adela—she shed tears of joy at my safety, and success,—and confirmed the promise of her heart and hand.

"The marriage-day drew near.—One evening I sought her in our favourite grove. As I was flying towards her, I beheld by her side my dearest friend:—his arm en-

circled her waist; her head reclined on his shoulder; and tears fell from her eyes.—I drew the sword that hung by my side—

"'Defend thyself!' I cried.—

"'Against thee, Haultein?—never!' exclaimed he.—'Be composed, and hear 'me but one instant.'

"'Draw!'—cried I—'Traitor!—cow-'ard!'—

"'He is my brother!' shrieked the terrified Adela—but the sword had done its dreadful work. He fell—and I beheld him expiring by my hand.

"The first agonies of Adela at length subsided—too well she satisfied me that the murdered Annalt was her brother. Some mystery, I well knew, had hung over his birth.

"On that day, he had received permission to disclose *the secret* to her: within an hour she would have communicated it to me.

"She urged me to fly from the lordly protector of Annalt, the proud Baron of Halberstat; who would infallibly sacrifice

me to the manes of his favourite—to his own revenge—for—he had himself been rejected by her—*he* would now discover that it was for my sake.

"'O Adela,' I cried, 'let him take 'my life, for it is now a burden to me.'

"'Say not so,' said she, sorrowfully, 'since it is all *my earthly hope*.'

"For her sake, then, I fled—but the horrors of murder, the tortures of remorse, pursued my steps—my days were days of grief—my dreams were of death, and ever-during pain—my mind, my body, were the prey of fever—almost of madness.

"One night, I wandered forth from my concealment, in hopes of breathing a freer air than in my chamber—I bent my way to a ruined chapel:—round the Gothic spaces where once the painted windows had glowed with the forms of saints and angels, the ivy crawled,—and the weeping birch threw in its mournful boughs, that sighed to the passing air.—

"Its pavement was the grass of the earth,—and its roof the starry heavens.—Where

the altar steps had stood, now rose a verdant bank :—I ascended it—I kneeled on the consecrated spot—I poured out my soul in penitence—I fixed my eyes on the full-orbed moon :—wildly I cried, 'Shade of 'my murdered friend, where art thou now? '—perhaps in the cold moon thou mayst 'abide to wait thy final doom. Where—'oh where, does the poor unbodied spirit 'rest?' I still watched the silver planet as if I would find him there—my brain was whirling round—I withdrew my eyes—I looked towards the interior of the chapel—methought I beheld him :—his features clad in the hue of death—in his breast the yawning wound of my sword. His eyes wide open, without sense, or motion, were fast fixed upon mine. His garments were the garments of the grave—and he stood—still, and speechless, as a statue. The nerves of this warrior frame shook like the aspin in the breeze. I staggered—I fell—I came to life in this dungeon.—I made an effort to rise—and felt that I was loaded with chains. The search of the

tyrant had been too successful—his emissaries had found me senseless on the ground. Five miserable months I have lingered here. The pity of my jailer has given me this parchment—but—he will take no token from my hand to Adela.—O Adela! but let my senses beware of dwelling on her name.

* * * * * *

"My jailer has informed me that I am doomed to perish with hunger—he has brought my last supply—provision for a week!—thus long, then, must I anticipate my fate.

* * * * * *

"Ten days have elapsed—Adela, already worn down with heart-consuming cares, heard my fate decreed, and died of grief.

"The tyrant has sent her remains into my dungeon.—

"They bring me no more food.—

"I had the consolation of shedding a few tears over the corse of Adela—I can shed no more.—

* * * * * *

Alas! the beauteous features now change.

" Hunger tears my entrails—I feel a dreadful impulse to devour her poor body! —O God! spare me that agony.

* * * * * *

" The tortures of famine drove me to the furthest limit of my chain. I could barely reach the arm of what once was Adela—I seized it—I raised it to my famished mouth—I stopt—I cast a look of frenzy on her face:—' Adela!' I cried, ' forgive me!'—But that look was my safety.—I recalled the smiles that had blessed my sight—' No'—said I—' let ' me starve—but be thou unharmed!'

" I kissed the clay-cold hand, and laid it gently by her side.

* * * * * *

" One day more I linger—my torments increase!—I am sick to death—my jailer *yet* is kinder than my persecutor—he has

removed the body, and promised to hide it in the earth.

"Pitying mortal!—if any such peruse this scroll—take warning—and command thy passions!—I die."—

The blood of Frederick was chilled in his veins—no slumber closed his eyes. Long and painful were his reflections on the sufferings of which he had read;—at length, his mind recurred to his own,—yet, with feelings somewhat abated in poignancy, did he now contemplate them.

"Disappointed, afflicted, as I am," said he, internally,—"I am not sunken to despair. I fly not from the terrors of guilt—I tremble not at the shadows of remorse:—tyrants oppress not me, nor my beloved, to the earth:—no dungeons threaten to receive me into a living tomb;—but Hope yet beckons me, though with a trembling hand."

He rose early, and wrote to Helena;—but another night had passed, and he wrote not in the same spirit of mitigated anguish

which had yesterday visited his heart. And now, after a few more days of heavy, and tedious travelling, he arrived at Vienna.

CHAP. LXIII.

When the sorrowing exile had established himself in his temporary abode, his first care was to finish the transcripts from his overflowing heart, which he had made at various periods of his journey. He now added a slight sketch of the route he had taken, and dispatched all to his beloved Helena, enclosed in a few lines of affectionate friendship to Mr. Melcombe.

His next thought was to write to his father—urging all that he wished, and—was determined yet, to hope. But, he reflected that both duty and prudence dictated to him first to begin to *act* in the task which had been appointed him. This was, an endeavour to recover a large sum of

money, formerly lent by the father of Mr. Beaumont the elder, to a gentleman who had once been his college companion—now dead:—but whose nephew and heir was, as Mr. Beaumont had been informed, at this time established in a respectable banking-house, in Vienna.

Frederick immediately waited on him, and delivered the proper letters, and other documents, from his father; but they were received with surprise. The gentleman had never heard of Mr. Beaumont or the debt, and the vouchers were disputed, as not being of sufficient authority for such a claim. Reference was, in consequence, made to a lawyer, who represented that it would be necessary to write to Mr. Beaumont himself.

The delay which this would occasion, gave to the view of Frederick a dreary prospect of lengthened absence from England.

"Yet," said he to himself, "since I must see Helena no more 'till I hear again

from my father, what imports it where I waste the wretched intervening hours?"

He stated all the circumstances to his father, and, at the same time, again expatiated on his recent overwhelming disappointment, the strength of his passion, and the transcendent merits of its object.

Soon afterwards, he formed the determination of forcing himself into the scenes of busy life, by which he was surrounded. Mrs. Villiers had entreated that he would submit to this; and Helena had, during their latter mournful conversations, pressed the same request.

He viewed the town, the buildings,—the various, and noble institutions for the relief of human misery, for which Vienna is signalized. He was the more impressed with admiration of them, as the extent of the city, when compared with the beauty, and usefulness of its edifices, was not great. The place of general resort, called the Prater, which had been allotted by the Emperor Joseph the Second, to the use of the public, attracted his particular atten-

tion. There, at certain hours, carriages of every description, as well as equestrians and pedestrians, of every rank, assembled to enjoy the delights of riding, and walking, under the spreading trees, on the banks of the Danube.—There, and there only, by the especial command of the late Emperor, were all ranks indifferently assembled. The accurate distinction of classes in Germany, on all other occasions, is too well known to require particular notice.

To the Prater Frederick would frequently bend his course—but most frequently at those hours, when it was least disturbed by sights, and sounds, of gaiety and pleasure.

After a short time, however, by a violent exertion of self-control, he plunged at once into society, by delivering the letters of introduction which had been presented to him by Mr. Melcombe and others. These immediately brought upon him an inundation of attentions, which made him almost repent the effort he had made.

Vienna is eminently distinguished by hospitality to strangers,—whose ancestry is not scrutinized with the same rigorous accuracy which is exercised upon that of the native inhabitants. If a foreigner be in himself, a gentleman, and have a proper introduction, he is, at all times, secure of an high, and honourable reception.

Frederick Beaumont presented both these claims on the notice of his new associates; —the former, in a degree so distinctly marked, that, numerous as were his other advantages, one might almost term this his characteristic excellence.

Among those noble personages who had been earliest in their attentions to him, and whose manners had most particularly engaged his regard, was Count Waldenberg; a man, in whose manners, although he was not exempt from the lofty demeanour of a German noble, there was also visible, a dignity, of which pride is frequently very *innocent*; and whatever pride was discernible in Count Waldenberg, seemed to result more from the ambition of sustaining

his name by his conduct, than a haughty presumption that *himself* was ennobled by his name.

At a splendid dinner, to which Frede-derick was invited by this nobleman, appeared many ladies of rank, beauty, and elegance. The host, and his guests—both male and female—regarded the new English visitor with admiration:—they internally lamented that, in his noble countenance, there was an expression of melancholy, which very rarely, and even then by a sudden effort, was seen to yield to the cheerful play of conversation; but, when the effort was made, so sweet was the smile they caught, that they secretly wished it would more frequently visit his countenance. The gentlemen paid him the most courteous attentions; and, the ladies—looked as if they would, not uncourteously, receive his attentions, would he but take the trouble of paying them.

Polite, however, he was, in the most eminent degree; he was unable to be otherwise; but this, let it be remembered,

was his first appearance in public, since he had been thrown down from his pinnacle of felicity.

One lady, however, who, though a visitor, was evidently the mistress of the feast, had repeated occasions of addressing him; and, by her manner of doing so, insensibly drew his attention. Her countenance was of dazzling beauty; her air peculiarly noble; and in both was there much of attraction; yet, *not* of such power as to fix the attention of Frederick, 'till he had observed that her hair was auburn, and her eyes were blue. For a moment, as he contemplated her eyes—he thought them almost too brilliant,—and fancied that they did not combine with their sprightliness, that bewitching softness which was ever visible in those of Helena.

"But they are precisely of the colour of Helena's eyes," said he internally—and so heavy a sigh was rising at the thought, that he made a struggle to suppress it; and again looking toward the lady,—invited her to take a glass of wine with him. She

smiled consent—and from that time, as he was seated by her side, he addressed to her something more of conversation than he had before done to any individual of the party.

She had been introduced to him as the Baroness of Linzendorf; whom, shortly afterward, he discovered to be the sister of Count Waldenberg.—She was about four and twenty, and had two years, before, lost an husband, much older than herself, to whom in her earliest youth, she had been plighted by her father, because—his sixteen untarnished quarters of nobility had borne the severest investigation.

Beaumont met her frequently at the house of her brother, whom he soon afterwards accompanied on a visit to her at her own. Her parties were brilliant, and, to all but Frederick, amusing.—She was, herself, independently of her prepossessing exterior, highly remarkable for the powers of her intellect, the cultivation of which had formed her recreation, or rather her refuge from various domestic sorrows. In her more select parties were associated, with her bro-

ther, and a few intimate female friends, an Irish gentleman—now on his travels—Sir Patrick O'Hara—and a young Englishman,—plain in manners,—honourable in principle, not of the *first* water in the polish of the world; yet of the higher order of what is commonly termed *John Bull*—he was not *precisely* what Johnson calls "a good hater"—for he did not strenuously hate "a whig, a knave, or a fool;"—but so emphatically did he hate a Frenchman, that all his powers of detestation seemed to be concentred in that one point; so that in truth he fairly deserved the designation of a very good hater. He bore the name of Langton, with a good English estate of five thousand pounds a year.

There was one other somewhat frequent visitor at the Baroness of Linzendorf's:—Signor Marsiglio, of Italian birth. His features were regular—his eyes dark and piercing, and the *usual* expression of his brow serene.—His manners were studiously polite, and the Baroness received with courtesy—Frederick doubted whether

with complacency—the homage which they paid most distinguishingly to her. All that he, as yet, seemed able to trace distinctly, was, that he entertained a passion for the lovely Baroness.—He soon afterwards, from certain eloquent glances, and round unvarnished compliments, caught a like suspicion of honest George Langton—and Sir Patrick betrayed himself to be indubitably in the same predicament by a little blunder of which it was not easy for any one to overlook the meaning;—for he said, looking full at the Baroness, that "It was quite clare and certain he was not distined to be happy with the dare object of his silent adoration,—for that he had promised his uncle to marry Miss Flora Tyrconnel if he did not fall in love with some fair crater in his travels." Now, although this was precisely what he had done, it did not *occur* to him that he was thereby disengaged from the *conditional* promise to his uncle.

With these and other characters, most of them either novel, or in a degree inter-

esting to him, did Beaumont oblige himself to occupy his attention, and pass much of his time;—while all his happiness, or, more properly speaking, all his consolation, was extracted from the letters which he wrote, and received, from those beloved friends, by whose injunctions he was governing his conduct.

His new acquaintance, the Count and his sister, in particular, would kindly strive to chase "the busy meddling fiend" of melancholy from his brow: with this view, they pressed him to make one in an excursion to a scene of amusement, within a few miles from Vienna.—Frederick was on his own account, disinclined to the scheme; but he derived a kind of secondary pleasure from obliging those who were studying to amuse him. But the place which fashion had chosen for its *gay* retreat from the crowded city, was, to him, less attractive than the immediate vicinage of the city itself.—The scenery around it was open, uninteresting, and, in his eyes, far inferior to the walks of the Prater.

In a letter written to his Helena from this temporary abode, having slightly portrayed the characters that surrounded him, he ended thus:—

"But, 'a crowd is no company: men's 'faces are but like pictures in a gallery, and 'talk, but a *tinkling cymbal*, where there is 'no love.'

"So said the mighty Bacon:—for once, my sweet Helena, my heart re-echoes the words of wisdom.

"I came hither, in some measure, to comply with the wishes of my associates; but much, how much!—more, by way of following the spirit of your injunctions.—Yet, were my blessed love to know what a burden is society, at certain times, to my very soul, she would,—I am assured she would,—release me from the toil of supporting it.—Dearest, dearest Helena, let me but live to solitude, and thee!—Is this sad indulgence too much to ask? But in the mean time, and until I have your permission to lay it down, this heavy weight of conversation—of what is called amuse-

ment—I will continue to bear: your slightest wish I will for ever obey; I am clay in your hands; mould me at your pleasure; and whatever may be your will, I shall find sweetness in executing it, because it *is yours*.

"But, O Helena, Helena! while I mix in the giddy throng, while I pace the crowded walk, while my lips move mechanically in idle prate, of the topics of the day,—my heart, my thoughts, my existence, are gone, over tracts of country, and rolling waves, to that dear spot, where love, and hope, and friendship, lately dwelt in everlasting union:—

O for those mountains wild, those cliffs sublime,
Where thou, and I,—O blessed time!—
Did careless stray,
The live-long day,
And their rough steeps with hearts elate could climb.

O sun! with what transported eyes
I then beheld thy glories rise,
And, through each hour,
Ador'd thy pow'r,
Which lighted up my soul, earth, sea, and skies.

O lovely Cambria! how cool, how clear
Thy silver babbling waters were!
Thy tangled woods,
Thy rushing floods,
How wild, how awful, and how fondly dear!

How different from thy soft and simple shade,
This barren common, and this proud parade!
The studied walk,
Insipid talk
Of the vain coxcomb, and the vainer maid.

Be theirs the joy they love—while my delight
Shall be by yonder moon's soft trembling light
To think alone on thee,
And nature's dear variety,
Though both are distant far!—both banish'd from
my sight.

"Pardon the irregularity of the strain in which my heart bursts forth towards yours. —It will meet no other eye, or ear,—and it will serve to tell you the thrice—nay three hundred times told tale, that I am

"For ever yours,

"F. B."

CHAP. LXIV.

"It was the winter wild;" and the stern power of frost had arrested the waters of the Danube. Parties in sledges were formed on the ice, and Frederick was invited to join them. The novelty of this scene afforded him something more resembling amusement than any thing he had seen since his first arrival at Vienna.—His company was every where in request, and entertainments were frequently given, to which he was under a kind of obligation to attend the Baroness, and her friends. That lady, whenever she appeared, was surrounded by the noble, the graceful, and the gay; yet, though most eminently attracting admiration, and by no means insensible to its charms, neither joyous parties, nor brilliant assemblies, were her chief delight. Much more did she enjoy her small friendly parties, her conversaziones, and

her select evening suppers.—Perhaps, she had still more gratification in those mornings, which, as the winter advanced, and their intimacy increased, she frequently passed in reading with Beaumont, or working while he read, or assisting his progress in the German language, which she was capable of doing in a manner much more pleasing to him than that of the professional instructor, whom he had engaged for the same purpose. Having made great advances in this language, while he was at Oxford, his proficiency was very soon highly admired by his preceptors in Vienna;—and the Baroness would prettily boast of her share in his *education*. He, in his turn, repaid the benefit, by materially advancing her in her English studies.

One morning, while they were reading the Paradise Lost en tête-à-tête, the Baroness was very earnestly endeavouring to discover the full meaning of a difficult passage—when a loud rap announced the arrival of visitors.—" How I hate morning visits!"—cried she, and rang the bell in

the intention of being denied,—but suddenly recollecting that, as she had admitted one visitor, it would be somewhat too pointed a distinction to exclude all others;—she changed her order, and received her company,—but was so little disposed to entertain them, that Frederick wondered whither her vivacity was flown.—They soon took their leave, and she resumed her book, wondering why morning visits were invented. "To torment you, I think; or to give *me* an opportunity of doing so," said Beaumont. "You!—no—you - - - - are a rational being, and can think it possible that *I* should be *almost* one."—

"Come then, let us return to Milton. You improve miraculously; and your suffering me to assist your studies is a deed of real kindness. I know not what I should do with myself, if you were to banish *all* morning visitors."

As Frederick said this, he threw himself back in his chair, and for some minutes, looked in silence at the fire.—The Baroness fixed her eyes on his face,—as if she

would read what was passing in his mind—then suddenly withdrew them, casting them down on her book, as she hastily opened it.

Frederick started up, saying—

"What an attentive scholar, as well as fair one, am I blessed with!—you positively reproach my idleness."—So saying, he took his seat by her side; then half smiling,

"You were certainly studying something,"—said he; "but it was not Milton; for your book is upside down."

The Baroness had perceived this, and in some confusion, was, at that very moment, in the act of reversing it.

The Baroness again read to her master.—It was the eighth book, and she proceeded in reading, and translating, for some time, with peculiar success. She read the reply of Raphael to the speech of Adam:

"Nor are thy lips ungraceful, sire of men,
Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee
Abundantly his gifts hath also pour'd,

Inward and outward both, his image fair;
Speaking, or mute, all comeliness and grace
Attends thee, and each word each motion forms."

"You have read that charmingly," cried Frederick, "and I am sure you understand it."

The eyes of the Baroness were turned upon him, while he spoke. The application which she had involuntarily made of the words of Milton, struck her more forcibly than ever, and, deeply blushing, she bent her eyes again on the book.

At that moment, entered Sir Patrick O'Hara. This gentleman had great expectations from his uncle, before mentioned; expectations, which the said Sir Patrick's "alacrity in sinking" money, permitted him not to slight, or despise. He had therefore written to his uncle, and expressed - - - - - but the reader, perchance, may be desirous to know, not merely what, but *how* he wrote;—a curiosity which whoever shall entertain it, will find gratified by the following authentic copy of his letter:—

"MY DEAR UNCLE,

"If you knew what it was to be the Baroness of Linzendorf, I am so plaguily in love with her, that I am sure you will have the goodness to release me from that match you were making with Miss Flora Tyrconnel, when I return to Dublin. The Baroness, into the bargain, has got an immense fortune, as they are telling me, and all in her own disposal, now, which would go a great way to hinder any one of those noble timbers which I used to see them lugging off from the woods of Kilkenny, from being cut down. Besides, one half of that estate has long been under a bit of a mortgage, which, you know, my marriage with the Baroness would prevent all at once. I mean by this no disrespect at all to Miss Flora, as I hope she is believing; for no man was ever better disposed to fall in love with a lady than I was deep in for it with her, until I happened, by the merest chance that could be, to see the Baroness; and so there is clearly no kind of ill compliment in that. The

Baroness, to be sure, has long been pretty closely besieged by a few others, besides myself, before I knew her; but you know we have a pretty method in our country with any that think proper to step in, and interrupt us in our business.

"This is all, at present, my dear uncle, from him who always was, and always has been,

"Your affectionate nephew,

"PAT. O'HARA."

The uncle of Sir Patrick was an Irishman by birth, and was once heard to say, that his *mother* was an Irishman as well as himself. His father, however, was an Englishman, and an eminent mathematician; and though he did, now and then, commit some trifling mistakes, in right of his mother, yet did he inherit from his father a certain clearness of reasoning, when he set his mind closely to a subject, which often dazzled and delighted his countrymen, and made him to his nephew an invaluable friend and adviser. He now, with

great patience and precision, and by means of three pages of close writing, not only gratified Sir Patrick by his permission to offer himself to the Baroness, but convinced him that his own promise had only been conditional, and that he was in effect, perfectly at liberty to dispose of himself according to his wishes, if he could prevail on the fair and wealthy widow to listen to his addresses. This epistle threw him into the most vehement transports of happiness, —and, instantly hastening to the house of the Baroness, for the purpose of giving vent to his long-smothered flame,—he found her, as we have seen, reading Milton with Frederick Beaumont.

The Baroness's blush, before mentioned, was deepened by the vexation she felt at the unseasonable intrusion of Sir Patrick. He perceived the effect, but mistook the cause; and, immediately concluding that Beaumont had just been making proposals which were displeasing to the Baroness, he thought the shortest and safest way for him, was to retreat as soon as he politely

could, and leave her an opportunity of giving Mr. Beaumont the *coup de grace*,—which he well knew his other English acquaintance had received from her a very short time before, without having either drowned himself, or broken his heart in consequence. Convincing himself, therefore, that Beaumont would also be satisfied with putting a civil question, and receiving a civil, though not kind, answer, with Christian fortitude, and thus make way for him without more loss of time, he was, for the present, content with making a few gallant speeches, and a few native blunders—some of which extorted a smile from his grave and silent auditors—and, telling the Baroness, with a gay, and triumphant air, that he should "hope soon to see her again on a more *interesting occashin*"—he wished her a good morning.

He waited on the Baroness again the very next day, at an early hour—made known his passion—his family connexions—his estate in Kilkenny—and his uncle's *consint*. . . . . .

"Your uncle's consent, Sir!—why,—pray, Sir—did you tell him that you had received *mine?*"

"O no, my dearest Madam, I could not tell him I had received it, before I had taken the liberty of asking for it; but I hope you will not be so cruel and disdeanful as to refuse it to me now?"

Of this cruelty, this disdain, however, was the Baroness guilty,—and great was the dismay, great the astonishment, of the disappointed Baronet;—who immediately began to threaten a direful vengeance on Beaumont, whom he instantly accused to her as the cause of his "rejection."

"Mr. Beaumont!"—cried the Baroness "—vengeance on Mr. Beaumont!—for what, Sir?"

"For having chated me of your heart, Madam.—Are you not all trimbling from head to foot, because I was after talking of vingince on Mr. Beaumont?—and did not I lave him hare with you yesterday morning—thinking to be sure you did not look plased at him, and that you would sind him

away in a twinkling?—and there was he, I'll be bound for him, plading his cause succissfully, while I, that have been adoring you long before ever he saw you,—am slighted and rejected:—but I will have iximplary satisfaction,—he may depind upon it."—And he was departing in great wrath—when the Baroness, endeavouring to detain him, cried—

"Hear me—Sir Patrick—it is all a mistake—totally a mistake—Mr. Beaumont has never——"

Count Waldenberg entered, and caught the last words—

"Mr. Beaumont has never done—what?—my dear sister—why all this terror, and why is Sir Patrick thus disturbed?"

Sir Patrick referred him to the lady, and abruptly took his leave.

"Follow him, I beseech you, my dear brother," cried the Baroness, "and prevent a quarrel:—he has been making proposals to me which I refused;—and he has taken up a false idea—quite erroneous—

that—that—Mr. Beaumont—Mr. Beaumont——"

"Mr. Beaumont is the cause, I suppose."

"Yes—yes—but he is *not*—I was just assuring him so when you came in;—but, pray, my dear brother, follow Sir Patrick—he is so angry, so violent—and you well know the particular failing of his countrymen on this point."

Count Waldenberg looked very grave—but, pressing his sister's hand, and entreating her to be composed, did as he was desired.

Sir Patrick had flown instantly to the house of Mr. Beaumont. He found him alone. With very little preface, he acquainted him that he was come to demand satisfaction!

"May I ask for what, Sir?"

"For what, Sir!—why, for supplanting me, Sir for decaiving me—robbing me—bamboozling me—and you know virry will, Sir, that it is an affront a gin-

tleman cannot brook ;—and, Sir,—I repate it—I must have satisfaction."

Frederick answered with great composure,—" Sir, I have neither deceived, robbed, nor, to my knowledge, affronted you."

" What, Sir !—did you not know, and have I not hinted it to you a hundred times, that I was in love to distraction with the Baroness of Linzendorf ?—and now, Sir, she has refused me—rejected me—and all for you, Sir :—she does not deny it, Sir : —Is not she now ready to die with tripidation, becase I said I would have satisfaction from you ?—Was you not making a declaration to her yesterday morning ?—and will you not give me satisfaction now, Sir ?"

" Listen to me, Sir Patrick :—I must answer your questions in the order in which you put them.

" First, I will not give you satisfaction."

" Not give me satisfaction !" cried Sir Patrick.—" But I should be virry sorry to put you to any sort of inconvanience, Sir

—perhaps," with a smile it was impossible to misunderstand—" perhaps you are not much used to these little matters, and then, Sir——"

The indignant blood of Frederick rushed to his cheeks;—but still, firmly commanding himself—

" Those who know me better, Sir Patrick, know that I do not merit your insinuation, which your present discomposure may in some measure excuse. A few months ago, Sir, I dared fight a duel;—at the present moment, I dare do more;—I dare refuse one;—and that, because reason, as well as the feelings I endured after I had fought, convinced me that it was highly blameable, and absolutely unjustifiable. Therefore, Sir, I will not fight you."

Count Waldenberg entered as Beaumont spoke the last words.

He continued:—" I am glad you are come, my Lord:—Sir Patrick has challenged me, on a charge of having supplanted him in the affections of your sister,

the Baroness of Linzendorf. I have refused his challenge, because, I now fight no man,—and will, at any time that you may do me the honour to desire it, give you my reasons at large. I will not fight him—although he has, for that refusal, adjudged me to be a coward.

"To *you* I am bound to answer his charge respecting the Baroness. He alleges that I have made a declaration of love to her;—I assure you, on my honour, that I have made none."

The fiery Baronet broke in upon the conversation, by exclaiming to Frederick, that he was sure he had entangled the lady's heart, and meant to take possession of it—bluntly applying to him for a direct answer to this last allegation.

"Sir," said Frederick, with more warmth than he had before suffered himself to express, "when you put questions without authority, you must excuse me if I leave them without a reply."

The Count then interposed, and, entreating Sir Patrick to recollect himself, added,

that Mr. Beaumont had spoken like a man of honour, and a gentleman — "and," said he, "truth obliges me to declare, Sir Patrick, that in both those characters, he has a claim upon you for an apology."

Sir Patrick made a great many wry faces, —but, after a long struggle, said that— "to be sure he had been mistaken, respicting the declaration, though he could not help being afraid it would come, and even that it would be succissful. But it is virry true, my Lord, that I had no reason to insinuate that Mr. Beaumont was a coward;—and so, Sir, (to Frederick,) I beg your pardon;—but it 's the first time I ever begged any man's pardon when I had just been after running him through the body."

Frederick smiled, shook hands with him, and told him he forgave him with all his heart.

Count Waldenberg went immediately to his sister, and, having first relieved her apprehensions of a duel, continued some time in earnest conversation with her alone.

CHAP. LXV.

THE scene in Monmouthshire was, outwardly, of a more tranquil nature. In the bosom of retirement, in the active exercise of all her duties, the heart-wounded Helena took refuge from reflection. In the month of December, Mrs. Falkener gave birth to a daughter; and Helena devoted her whole time to the interesting care of nursing both mother and child.

Mr. Falkener's anxieties were unceasing, 'till both were in health, and safety; and then, his domestic happiness reached its height:—yet was it overclouded with regret at the pallid looks, and pensive countenance (in which every smile was an effort) of the sweet attentive friend, and nurse, of his wife and infant.

Mrs. Villiers was miserable from the same reason, and too well aware of the cause of these sad effects, fondly allured her back to her own maternal care, as soon as Mrs. Fal-

kener was tolerably recovered. Wishing, however, to avoid touching on the real occasion of her daughter's altered looks, she tenderly chid her for too much neglecting herself, and was incessantly finding some little employment of benevolence, visit of kindness, or domestic occupation, which she solicited her to undertake. Her own sufferings at witnessing those of her Helena, she spoke of, and that but sparingly, to Mr. Melcombe alone; and, by his friendly assistance, even executed her painful task of assumed cheerfulness, with patient fortitude. The task of Helena—still more painful—was still more resolutely performed. No murmur, no tear, in the presence of her mother, escaped her—but, as she too deeply felt,

——"The grief that does not speak,
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart, and bids it break."

A moment—a chance—overset all the fair shows of tranquillity, and endurance. The winter, though oftentimes, as usual, overclouded with storms, sent forth some

milder showers, and the sun emitted some faint rays of watery light. One morning—it was the first of the year—Helena bent her steps towards the shrubbery. She visited the rose-tree which, a few years before, had been planted for her by Frederick, and as once mentioned on a particular occasion, carefully watered by herself. It was a winter rose. She looked steadily at it—she beheld a rose in full bloom—she plucked it, trembling with pleasure and pain. She kissed it:—she placed it in her bosom—took it to her own apartment—put it in water, and nursed it fondly;—but, short was its blooming life, and, soon its tender leaves lay scattered on the ground. She bewailed its early fate, and, taking her pen, thus taught it to bewail its own:—

Farewell, farewell, thou scarcely dawning year!
To me thy glories never will appear!
Fall'n are my silken leaves, my buds decay,
And, drooping, mourn their transitory day.

Yet I burst forth amid the raging storm,
And rear'd amongst rude winds my tender form.
I bloom'd, I blush'd, beneath the chilling show'r;
And talk'd of Summer suns in Winter's dreary hour.

Like Hope, I sprang beneath an adverse sky;
Like Hope, allur'd and charm'd the craving eye;
Like Hope, alas! gay dream!—like Hope—I die.

The mournful truths she had imaged from this cherished flower, were more than she could bear. Her head bowed over her hands upon the table, and her heart found vent in sobs and tears. Her mother entering, unseen, approached her—

"Helena!" she cried—"my child!"—and sunk into a chair by her side, overwhelmed by feelings not less poignant than those of her daughter.

To dissemble was now past the power of that suffering daughter,—and they wept together, without uttering a word. But, Mrs. Villiers, whose mind had of late, strongly entertained a project of making one more effort to bring the sorrows of her Helena to an end, now, secretly, but decidedly, resolved how to act. She deferred, for the present, the communication of her plan, upon which she was desirous of previously conversing with Mr. Melcombe.

"My dear friend," said she to him the next morning, "prepare yourself for an event that will, I know, draw largely on your fortitude. I, too, shall have my share of regrets;—but my very life is the happiness of my daughter:—in a word, I can no longer accept the sacrifice of her blooming youth, her hopes, perhaps her existence.—I *will* accompany them to India."

Mr. Melcombe started, as if transfixed by the shaft of death,—and, clasping his hands together, threw himself back in his chair. After a long interval of silence,—he exclaimed,

"Then farewell all that remained to me of earthly consolation!"—and instantly rushing from the room, he flew without reflecting who might observe him,—to the solitude of his own house. There he gave vent to feelings which he resolved that no eye should ever witness:—and prayed to his God for strength to support an existence from which all possibility of enjoyment was to depart for ever,—

"Should she," said he, "persevere in her purpose, not a hope will remain that she will ever return!—or, if ever—not for years to come,—certainly not 'till I shall be at rest.—Friend! wife, that *should* have been—could I but have prevailed—sister that *was*, and, as I vainly trusted would be to the end of life!—she will go—she will leave me—she will suffer—she will die—and I shall not be near her!"—

He wrote—he reasoned—he entreated—he implored:—see her—speak to her, on this point he could not. She wept over his sufferings—and their friendship—their separation;—but her determination was firm.—She had now communicated it to her daughter:—who resisted, pleaded, trembled for her mother's life;—but, finally, yielded—and, with the sanguine credulity of youth, at length began to hope—to trust—that her mother *could* live in India, since she had assured her that she now felt in better health than in all her life before. At that tender mother's bidding, she wrote to Frederick, to make

known this revolution in their fate. While she wrote, how light, how gladsome, was her heart!—but,—when she came to impart the tidings to her affectionate Matilda, she would weep at their approaching separation; and when she beheld the settled misery of Mr. Melcombe's countenance, she would think only of him, and feel its expression as a silent reproach to her.

At other times, she would shut herself up,—read the letters of Frederick, and, while the melancholy tale they told of his sufferings, pierced her heart, would fondly anticipate the delight of changing their mournful language to that of joy, and rapture. With her mother, she would sometimes indulge her smiling hopes, which, yet, again relapsed into apprehension at the experiment which she saw her determined to make.

"And then Mr. Melcombe,"—would she say—"poor Mr. Melcombe!"—Mrs. Villiers's heart sunk, while, deeply sighing, she answered,

"Yes, he will be sadly deserted indeed!"

In the midst of this contrariety of feelings, and but a few days after the letter announcing happiness to Frederick, was gone, Mr. Melcombe, one morning, by a hurried note written with his pencil, requested to see Mrs. Villiers alone.—He was admitted to her dressing-room. Helena on hearing the request, had hidden herself in her own apartment,—all trembling lest there should be some ill tidings of Frederick. As Mr. Melcombe entered, Mrs. Villiers, alarmed by his note, raised her eyes to his face. There was in it, a marked concern; yet was it not the *hopeless* look he had lately worn; nay, something like latent satisfaction seemed struggling beneath it.

"Surely, my dear friend," said she, at length, "you have some strange tidings to communicate."

"I have indeed!" said he;—"your projects will not succeed.—All, I fear, is at an end for the young people, and you will not go to India."

"Not go to India!"—cried Mrs. Villiers, gasping with a variety of emotions.—

"You will be dreadfully shocked at the cause," said Mr. Mel cmbe, "but I will torture you no longer. Let us read this letter together. It is from Mr. Beaumont."

"DEAR SIR,

"I am at a loss how to address you. I know not how far *you* have been concerned in deceiving me, respecting the most important transaction of the life of my son;—his choice of a wife.—I shall use but few words, since, doubtless, you are fully acquainted with all the circumstances to which I shall allude.—Many hours have not elapsed, Sir, since I saw a gentleman—from England: it was but yesterday that I conversed with him.—Having heard of some expressions that had escaped him in company, I instantly sought him out, and applied to him for a full explanation. He gave it:—it respected the young lady whom you had so lavishly commended:—can she possibly be the same? and *could*

you thus highly extol her qualities? her conduct?—is *this* Miss Helena Villiers?—The gentleman in question assured me that, but a few days before he left London, she had eloped—eloped from her mother's protection, from the honourable love of my son,—with un unprincipled Nobleman, in his own carriage—to his own house in the country;—that a duel ensued;—(but I need not inform *you*, Sir, what ensued)—and that the life of my son was set in hazard for an object thus unworthy.—These matters, I am informed, furnished table-talk for all London.—Yet, I hear with indignation, that, after the duel, my son brought the lady back with him to London—degenerate boy!

"I write in the greatest possible haste,—to save the opportunity of the fleet, which is under weigh. Should I be too late to *recall* the conditional consent which I gave by the last dispatches over-land, I shall be miserable for life.

"I write to my son to the same purpose as to yourself: forward the letter to him, I

entreat you, wherever he may be, without delay.—Its object is to forbid him ever again to see—hear of—*think* of—Miss Helena Villiers.—

"My fortune, my favour, my blessing, depend on his obedience;—and a failure in it would draw on him my malediction.

"The honour of every English gentleman's family is sacred. With respect to that of my own, I am, perhaps, peculiarly tenacious, and I shudder lest I should be too late to secure it.—

"I am, Sir, your humble servant,

"AUGUSTUS BEAUMONT."

Keen was the anguish, and deep the resentment, of Mrs. Villiers at this epistle.—In vain did Mr. Melcombe plead the strength of the circumstances that had been thus misrepresented to Mr. Beaumont:—when he but hinted at the idea of explaining them properly—

"Explain, Sir!"—she cried;—"*solicit* the candour of Mr. Beaumont! or even

his attention to the true statement of circumstances, in order that he may *deign* to receive my daughter into his family? Never, Mr. Melcombe. Surely, your friend should have *suspended* his judgment, 'till further inquiry—he might at least have trusted to *your* knowledge of the character of my Helena. No—all is now over."

Mr. Melcombe was silent:—he felt for her most deeply—he almost felt *with* her; though he had attempted to soothe her, by reasoning on the contrary side.

She entreated him to leave her alone—that she might endeavour to compose her agitated spirits, and collect fortitude to communicate these dreadful decisions to her daughter, in the manner that might least afflict and wound her.—But before half the composure, half the fortitude she required for this trying occasion, had come to her aid, the anxious Helena appeared, uncalled, before her;—all resolution fled at the sight of her—and a few

tears would force their way. Helena was terrified:—

"What is it, my dearest mother?"—

Mrs. Villiers could not immediately answer.—At length—

"If you have fortitude,—if you have pride, Helena, call them instantly to your aid."—

"Fortitude! — pride!—has Frederick then - - - - - O that German lady!"—she could say no more.

"No, Helena, it is not *there!*—the blow comes *not* from Frederick."

"Then no matter whence it comes!"—cried Helena smiling—with an expression of mingled dignity and joy:—"Tell me all, my dear mother;—I am ready."

"Can you bear to lose Frederick, at last?"—Helena turned pale—"and to be separated from him by the breath of *Slander?*—Yet *can* you read that letter, and wish for Mr. Beaumont's leave to be the wife of his son?"—

Helena took the letter with an agitation, which became more violent at every word.

—She read to the end:—it fell from her trembling hands, and the mingled emotions of grief, disappointment, and indignation, burst from her heart, and her eyes.—These emotions left her, for some succeeding hours, silent, and motionless, like one stunned by a violent, and sudden blow. Her mother sat by her, but disturbed not her stillness, though it terrified her.

The task of writing to Frederick now fell on Mrs. Villiers:—she executed it with all the tenderness, and, at the same time, all the firmness, of which she was so eminently capable.

She grieved that thus it must be, but, she made known to him her determined rejection of whatsoever overtures might, in future, be made to her insulted daughter. Mr. Melcombe wrote, also, to sympathize, to console.—For advice, there was no longer occasion, or opportunity. Helena wrote not—and all that she could utter was,

"Tell him, that the hour he once antici-

pated, is arrived, and that I am doomed to shed, for myself, and for him, tears which he cannot wipe away."

It was now Mr. Melcombe's time to feel a dread of meeting the countenance of the grief-stricken Helena; he would nor for some days intrude on her distress. He attempted no more pleadings with Mrs. Villiers—he perceived that they were vain; but he wrote the fullest and clearest explanation to Mr. Beaumont, of the transactions of the preceding spring; and staking his life and honour on the truth of it, he represented to Mr. Beaumont, with all possible address, the necessity of his writing the fullest apology to Mrs. and Miss Villiers. At the same time, he communicated to him Mrs. Villiers's late, though now fruitless determination, made on a full conviction, that a disunion of Frederick, and Helena, would prove fatal to the happiness, if not the lives, of both.

This letter, if successful, would finally destroy the peace of him who indited it;

but, on that, he did not suffer himself to hesitate: he even endeavoured to provide himself with consolations.

"Something," said he, "may yet arise, to save us all;—whence, I know not;—but my heart shall rest in hope."

CHAP. LXVI.

THE agitation which Helena had gone through within the last few days, had severely shaken her frame,—and produced a considerable degree of fever. Her mother suffered unspeakable alarm: — the dangerous symptoms of her Helena's indisposition, however, were soon removed; —but they had left a fever of a more insidious kind, which preyed on her nerves and spirits.—

She was one day sitting in a pensive attitude, in her mother's dressing-room—when Mr. Melcombe sent up to solicit admittance.—Helena trembled:

"I *will* see him," said she, with a deep sigh.—Their first meeting was distressing to each. So deeply affected was this paternal friend at the alteration in that sweet countenance, so lately illumined with hope, and joy, that all his own interests were at that moment forgotten—and his voice faltered while he took her to his affectionate heart, and tried to speak to her of consolation.

"No, my friend,—my father,"—said she,—"there is no more comfort—for there is no more hope."—

Mrs. Villiers having been, just then, called out of the room, she proceeded:—

"My mother, you see, is as much resolved as Mr. Beaumont, and would not now, relent, even if my own heart could hereafter, on proper explanations, sacrifice its pride to—Frederick's happiness, and—my own."

"But you and Frederick are so young, my sweet Helena;—youth, and health, and mutual love," said he, emphatically, "should never despair. — Time works

wonders,—and you have, I trust, much time before you. How much darker were of late, my prospects, when you were all about to leave me alone!"—

Helena remembered what had then been her own prospects, and could not restrain her tears at the recollection.—

"Helena, Helena, weep not, my child, that I was not robbed of all I loved —of you,—of Frederick:—and, O my dear adopted daughter!—know you not how long, how tenderly I have loved your mother?"—

Helena did indeed, understand this for the first time.—She raised to him her languid eyes; then, hiding them with one of her hands, she put the other into his, and shed some tender tears, in which her own sorrows had no share.—

"God bless you!"—said he,—kissing affectionately the hand she gave him:—he could speak no more. Mrs. Villiers entered!—

"This will not do," said she:—"my

good friend, you must shew more firmness, or what will become of us all?"

He soon left them, and Helena, sincerely regretting that her mother had not returned his steadfast affection, confessed to her what had, in a moment of sympathizing kindness, broken from his heart, and how deeply the confession had affected them both,—

CHAP. LXVII.

COUNT Waldenberg and his sister, it may be remembered, were left engaged in a long, and earnest debate.—

When the Count had relieved the terrors of the Baroness, respecting the apprehended duel, he proceeded to make a few *brotherly* inquiries on the springs and causes of her extraordinary perturbation.—

" Your apprehensions, my dear sister,

did not seem to be very *equally* divided between the—*rivals*—am I to call them?"—

"O no, by no means—not rivals, certainly."

"Yet, Mr. Beaumont's attentions are very—yes, in my opinion, *very* pointed.—Then such frequent readings, and long conversations, in tête-à-tête, my dear Amelia, look symptomatic of *something*; and if Mr. Beaumont has never, as he assures me, said any thing very particular,—as yet,—still, he certainly refused to answer Sir Patrick's categorical question respecting his *intentions* of doing so."

"Did he?" asked the Baroness, with involuntary earnestness.—

The Count looked graver than he had done before. He paused—threw up his eyes—and fixed them on her face.—

He spoke again.

"Why, my dear *Baroness*, how is it *possible* for you to marry *Mr*. Beaumont? a *gentleman* certainly; but without even a remote connexion, as I understand, with any family of nobility."

"He is noble from head, to heart," said the Baroness; "but—but—there is no marriage in question—there is only a very sincere friendship, a similarity of tastes;—and besides, he may be, for any thing I know to the contrary, engaged elsewhere; I beg then, that you will say no more on the subject."

"There is certainly a cloud over him," said the Count;—"but whether from misfortune, or misconduct——"

"From the last, I am *sure* it is not," said the Baroness.

"Well!—good morrow, sister—It is a great pity that Mr. Beaumont is *not* noble!" So saying, he departed.

"It is a much greater pity that you *are*, my dear brother, since it makes you so very nonsensical," soliloquized the Baroness; "O that I knew *where* his heart is, as well as I know what it is made of! kindness, liberality, honour, are in the composition;—I have witnessed an hundred proofs of each."—

These reflections, and many which fol-

lowed them, so absorbed the Baroness, that her dinner was announced before she was aware that it was time to attend her toilet. She took a slight repast, and attired herself with *peculiar* elegance for an evening assembly at home.—

The first who arrived were a party of ladies, accompanied by two gentlemen. They were soon followed by Mr. Langton —and Signor Marsiglio.—Mr. Langton had, when he received his dismission as a lover, obtained the ready consent of the Baroness to be admitted as a friend. He had been considerably chagrined by his rejection, but had, by this time, tolerably recovered his naturally cheerful spirits.—

After the first compliments, he inquired of the Baroness whether Beaumont would be of their party.

" I believe—he will"—answered the Baroness, hesitatingly.

" That 's a glorious fellow !" resumed Langton : " What a pity it is he has not a little more vivacity !—I believe something

sits confoundedly heavy upon him, for I am certain he has spirit enough at the bottom.—I like all his ways—he is, bona fide, an Englishman."—

Signor Marsiglio bit his lip—then said, with a sarcastic smile,

"Do you recollect, Sir, that your *auditors* are not English?"

"'Pon honour, I did not recollect it;—and I beg ten thousand pardons;—but I find the German gentlemen such hospitable, honest fellows, that, no disparagement be it to say, I frequently do forget they are not Englishmen."

The Italian was silent; then resuming—

"Mr. Beaumont is not, I believe, of a very *impetuous* disposition."

The Baroness threw a frown on him, and had scarcely time to disperse it, when Frederick, and some other visitors, were announced. Count Waldenberg followed. —His attentions to Beaumont were studiously polite, but less cordial than usual.—

The conversation was lively, and gene-

ral; and a few of the company were engaged at cards.—

Politics are seldom discussed at Vienna; but tidings of the fate of the Duke D'Enghien had lately arrived, and were spoken of with a general voice of lamentation. Mr. Langton caught the intelligence for the first time. He was engaged in a party at whist, with Marsiglio, and two ladies.

He laid down his cards, and listening a moment, to be ascertained that he heard aright,

"The Duke D'Enghien!" exclaimed he sorrowfully "and have the dragon's claws reached *him?* I knew him well, when in England. He was the only Frenchman I ever, yet, could like."

Again—while he resumed his cards——
"Will nobody put an end to that fiend?"

"It is, indeed, to be regretted that it should be a crime for any individual to do so," said Frederick—"otherwise," he continued, in a lighter tone, fearing that the conversation might grow somewhat

too earnest, "I should recommend such an exploit to your own consideration, as you are so ardent in the cause."

"No, I thank you, it would be a worthy enterprise for a Frenchman; but an Englishman *cannot* be an *assassin*."

Beaumont, who was standing near Mr. Langton, chanced, at that moment, to cast his eyes on Marsiglio; and observed that his cheeks were, one moment colourless, and the next crimson.

Frederick fixed his attention upon him, in silence. He presently played a card that ruined his game. Yet, he was a celebrated whist-player.

Beaumont, soon after, took a seat near the Baroness. The buzz of general conversation gave him an opportunity of speaking to her aside. "Signor Marsiglio is honoured by your good opinion, is he not?" asked Frederick, in a whisper.

The Baroness replied, in the same tone,—

"I cannot say that he is, or ever was, a great favourite of mine: but, my late

Lord was extremely partial to him, and on that account, I have continued my civilities. I have, indeed, a still stronger motive; for he gave my Lord his best services on a very melancholy occasion—so melancholy that —I cannot, at present, dwell upon it."

"I am grieved that I have distressed you," said Frederick, in his kindest manner;—"I will speak of him no more."

The Baroness was solicited to adjourn to the musick-room, and to indulge the company by her performance on the Piano Forte. She endeavoured to evade this; she had played once before, in the presence of Beaumont, and had observed that neither then nor afterwards, had he requested her to play; she had therefore taken up an idea that musick was disagreeable to him. Being pressed, however, more urgently, she complied. She was also prevailed upon to sing. She opened the canzonets of Haydn, and, though she was accustomed to the Italian words—yet thinking that the English might be more

pleasing to Beaumont,—with sweet and tender expression, she sang

"My mother bids me bind my hair."

Beaumont had seated himself near the instrument and almost opposite to her. His eye beaming full upon her, caught hers: she beheld him panting for breath, —his colour fluctuating at every instant; and before she could conclude the strain, he had left his seat, and retired alone to the balcony.

After supper, a slight mention of Sir Patrick O'Hara from some one of the company, who had not heard of the quarrel of the morning, occasioned a considerable degree of embarrassment. Count Waldenberg bent his brow.—The Baroness cast down her eyes, and the hues of Frederick's countenance suffered a slight fluctuation—neither of them spoke.—The silence of three persons, who, as some of the company had heard it whispered, were all nearly concerned in the fracas, was in-

fectious; and conjectures began to circulate without words.—

The Count, in order to break the awful pause that ensued, hemmed, in preparation to speak; and, at length, fell into a topick scarcely yet gone by,—the marriage of a noble widow of Germany to a commoner without even fortune, or estate;—and he expressed particular indignation at the lady for having made the first advances.

"But possibly," said Frederick,—"nay probably—the attachment was strong, and mutual; and the lady, aware of the *impossibility* of the gentleman's aspiring, in *this* country, to a connexion so superior; yet seeing it to be the *only* path to happiness for both, might——"

The Count interrupted him—

"Pardon me, Sir;—in *this* country, did you say? why, Sir, is a great disproportion of rank, and this, when the superiority is on the *female* side, *ever* dispensed with in England?"

"Frequently, my Lord."

Count Waldenberg changed the conversation. The company dispersed, and the Baroness found, in the occurrences of the day, such ample food for meditation, that she attempted not, for a long time, to seek repose:—when she did so, it visited not her pillow. At length, she endeavoured to compose her thoughts by reading:—her book succeeded, in some measure, in banishing reflection, but not in supplying its place by amusement. And, in a short time, she fell asleep.—

CHAP. LXVIII.

Signor Marsiglio had, for some time, been a silent, but heedful observer of the rise, and progress, of Frederick Beaumont's reputation, for talents, for manners, and for conduct. In matters of intellectual discussion, it had frequently happened that they had differed in opinion; and a certain

showy eloquence which the Italian might boast, had been incessantly foiled by the more solid, and powerful reasonings of Beaumont. In the manners of Frederick, though now overshadowed by melancholy, there was an interest, a sweetness which fascinated his commonest acquaintance; and which frequently occasioned the more studied graces of the Italian to be passed unregarded.

The conduct of Beaumont was as highly honoured in Vienna, as it had been in England—and more than this it is scarcely necessary to say;—that of Marsiglio was, on the contrary, by many, suspected to be insidious, and designing;—although the late Baron of Linzendorf, a character of great simplicity, had been, as we have seen, particularly attached to him.

But, even the Baron had, at times, remarked, with concern, certain tokens of envy, and discontent, at the high qualities, or successful effects of those qualities, in the characters of others. Marsiglio had seldom felt these propensities so strongly,

as in the instance of the perfections of Frederick Beaumont; but still more deeply sensible was he of their power, as he watched their effects on the Baroness of Linzendorf,—once the object of a passion which he dignified by the name of love. It contained, however, so large a portion of interest and ambition, that, when she had decidedly rejected his overtures, his proud heart had found it no difficult task to expel its softer emotions, and receive in their place, those, more congenial to his nature, of sullenness, and resentment. Yet were these feelings studiously hidden from the eyes of common observers,—and, as much as was possible, from those of the Baroness—for a selfish policy continued to dictate the appearance of reverence to a patroness, in whose hands were lodged nearly the whole of the large property of her late Lord:—much of it had been liberally bequeathed to Marsiglio; but he could not forgive the Baroness for not putting him in possession, together with herself,—of the whole. Other particulars of

the past life of Marsiglio, will appear in due course;—for the present, suffice it to say, that he had, on the evening before described, seen and felt the scrutiny of Beaumont's eye, — and returned home, fraught with resentful malice at the discovery, in addition to the indignant envy which had before been rankling in his heart, against the admired, the accomplished, and, as he began to fear, too keenly penetrating Frederick Beaumont.—

Frederick had left the company about the same time with Marsiglio, feeling, that the suspicions which he had, for some time, entertained respecting his character, had now acquired tenfold strength. He speculated on them for a while; but, the song of the Baroness, having newly pointed all his griefs, by bringing before him the scenes of departed happiness, banished all other thoughts, and so fully engrossed his mind, that no sleep approached to give him comfort.

In the middle of the night, his ears were pierced by the cry of fire; and, instantly

rising to convince himself that he was not deceived, he saw from his window many persons rushing forward in one direction, and, in a moment afterward, the cries of "Fire! fire!"—"Help! help!"—were redoubled. He dressed himself as quickly as possible, and now beheld black volumes of smoke ascending from that part of the city where stood the mansion of the Baroness of Linzendorf. In a few moments he had flown to the spot, and found the house in flames.

"Is the Baroness saved?" cried he.

Some of her servants, who had hastened from the house to save *themselves*, cried out, "It is impossible to save her:—the staircase that leads to her apartments, has caught fire, and I dare not——"

"No"—cried another, "I should never be able to come near her, and should be burnt to death in attempting it.—O my poor lady!—there she is at the window."

Frederick perceived her, and heard her shriek.

"Shew me the staircase," cried he,

agonized with horror—and seizing the terrified footman who had been inactively lamenting his lady's fate, dragged him along towards the house—exclaiming aloud,—"Only shew me the staircase; I do not want *you* to approach it."

At length, he reached the foot of the stairs, and, darting up, through suffocating smoke, and spreading fire, he reached the topmost landing-place, vehemently exclaiming—"Where is the apartment of the Baroness?"—but no one appeared;—'till, after repeatedly calling aloud on her name, a distant exclamation of, "Here! here!"—and a failing attempt to unlock a door, caught his ears, and attracted his steps.—He seized the lock—it resisted—"Retreat one moment from the door," cried he,—and, in an instant, applying the whole force of his foot, he burst the lock, and found the Baroness, half suffocated, sinking to the ground. He caught her in his arms—wrapped her more closely in the loose robe she had thrown around her—and, catching up a blanket, threw it over

her, to shield her from the flames ;—then, flying down the staircase, bore her safely to the street. He could go no farther :—severely scorched, and nearly stifled, in his descent, he staggered, and fell, beneath his almost breathless charge.

The fresh air quickly revived the Baroness.

"He will die," she cried, "if he is not already dead! — Beaumont! Beaumont! speak if you have life!"

The Baroness was wildly gazing on him, when he opened his eyes, and gasped for breath.

"Heaven be blessed," cried she, "he lives!"

Her cautious servants had now crowded round her, all vociferating their thanks for her safety.

Count Waldenberg, too, was now arrived at the scene of horror :—he had slept profoundly, 'till awakened, too late for any useful purpose, by the tidings of the dreadful accident that had befallen the house of his sister.

"Bear them both to my house," ex-

claimed the Count—and, himself assisting the Baroness, they were all proceeding according to his directions, when they were met by Marsiglio, crying out,—"Where is the Baroness?"

"Here" — cried the Count—"and, thank Heaven! not, I trust, materially hurt."

"How was the Baroness saved?" asked Marsiglio.

"By Mr. Beaumont," cried the Count, "at the imminent hazard of his own life."

"Mr. Beaumont!—Mr. Beaumont!" —cried the servants, "ran through the flames to save my lady!"

Marsiglio's brow was contracted with rage—but, in such a scene, its expression was unnoticed.

Count Waldenberg took every possible care of the Baroness, and not less of her preserver, whom he loaded with blessings and praises.

The Baroness was lodged at the palace of the Count, but Beaumont, who had recovered from his stupor, was, at his own

earnest request, conveyed to his own dwelling. The Count visited him daily, and secured for him every possible advantage that care and needful remedies, could afford.

The Baroness was, within a few days, in a state of convalescence, though her spirits remained weak and agitated, from the terror which she had endured.

Beaumont recovered not so rapidly. His right arm had been so severely burnt, in repassing the flames, with the Baroness in his charge, that he was, for some time, confined to his apartment.

During this confinement it was, that the letter of Helena, announcing her mother's intention of accompanying them to India, reached his hands. He tore it open—he read—he could not believe his senses—he kissed it a thousand times—it was a delirium of joy!

Short-lived transport!—bright vapour of felicity!—seen, but to deepen the succeeding gloom! The letters from his father, from Mr. Melcombe, from Mrs Villiers, though dispatched some days after

that of Helena, had been committed to the same vessel. The latter of these now caught his eye.

"From Mrs. Villiers!" he cried—"this will confirm my bliss!"—he opened it—read it—and was more miserable than ever. Hope died within him; and, while his heart was beating with the pangs of a sudden, and dreadful disappointment, it bled, with still keener anguish, for the twofold affliction of his beloved.

He then read those from his father and Mr. Melcombe. That his father should have seized, with such avidity, the horrid tale of calumny! — and thus decisively acted upon it! — that father whom he wished to reverence—to love!—he dared not now turn his thoughts towards him—yet who, so well as himself, could explain every mis-stated circumstance, and restore the name of his Helena to its original brightness? He resolved, then, not to lose an instant in detailing every the minutest circumstance that had taken place:—his father would not, could not, doubt his veracity.

Mrs. Villiers's offended delicacy, and her consequent decisions, caused him to sicken with apprehension;—to her, too, he would write;—to his dear, his injured Helena, before either:—but his throbbing arm reminded him that, as yet, he was unable to write at all.

The dreadful accident that had befallen the house of the Baroness, was occasioned by the carelessness of the servants, in neglecting to adjust the musick-room, and remove the candles.

By great exertions, much of the mansion had been preserved from the flames, and while it was under repair, the Baroness remained at the house of the Count, her brother.

It may be well believed, that the first instant in which it was practicable for Frederick to use his pen, was employed in writing to England,—and first, as he had resolved, to her whose twofold affliction far surpassed, while much it aggravated, every pang which he suffered for himself.

"With a breaking heart, my Helena,"

—thus he wrote—" I attempt an answer to your letter. I shall afterward address your dear mother, in reply to her kind, yet cruel—— O Helena! they came together to my hand!—yours was in a moment torn open:—can I, need I, express to you the height of ecstacy to which it raised my soul? I scarcely possessed my senses, when—I opened that of your mother. Never, surely, did the world present such another contrast.—My father's too—I am indeed most wretched!—yet, say not, my love! my life! that you can shed a tear which I am unable to wipe away.

" By Heaven, I must—I will: my father shall understand all clearly—and then—but what, alas! in the interim, will not you—of myself I think, comparatively, but little—but what have not *you* to endure from these barbarous calumnies, these detested perversions!—and, oh! let me say, from our still more cruel separation!—My Helena! it is more than I can support. Has it not been said that evils are lightened by participation?—false and cold philosophy!

their weight is doubled ten thousand-fold —would to Heaven that I might suffer alone! Yet, droop not, my gentle love! —write to me, I implore you: tell me but that you are rising from this last, sad blow: and tell me that you rest entirely on *me*. Let me struggle through all difficulties—Duty, filial duty, is strong in my soul, even toward a father whom I can scarcely remember;—he is 'the Lord of Duty,'—and it shall duly influence my conduct; but my feelings are tyrannized by the great, THE MASTER PASSION of human existence.

"To Love was paid my almost infant homage; to Love, my ripening years confirmed it; and reason sanctifies the choice which nature made. In manhood—even to declining age, should it be my lot to reach it, I shall still be yours, more, incalculably more, than my own.

"Again, then, sweetest Helena, let me speak peace, and hope, to that dejected heart. O how much will you give me of both, if you can only assure me that I have not failed in this fond, this anxious

effort, to inspire them, from the wounded --oh! I dare not tell you how deeply wounded—mind of your

"F. B."

Frederick forgot not, overwhelmed as he was with his own afflictions, to send daily inquiries after the Baroness; and as soon as he was able to venture out, and could summon resolution to appear with outward composure, he determined to make personal inquiries respecting her recovery.

On all subjects but one, the conversations of Frederick and the Baroness had been frank, congenial, unreserved: but the name of love had never yet been alluded to.

Frederick now felt the weight on his heart so painfully oppressive, that it seemed to him impossible to preserve any longer the sacred silence which he had hitherto imposed on himself respecting the story of his love.

"Should she be alone," thought he— "and should my griefs—more difficult

than ever to conceal—burst from my heart, how kindly will she partake, how tenderly will she soothe them!"

He inquired for the Count:—he was not at home.

Might he be permitted to see the Baroness?

"Her spirits had been so severely shaken, that she had, as yet, seen no one; but, they would inquire,"—was the answer.

Beaumont was admitted.

The Baroness was half reclined on a sofa; she looked pale, and languid,—and the timidity, and gratitude, which softened the lustre of her eyes, gave her an expression of peculiar loveliness.

When she saw Beaumont enter, with his arm in a sling,—his complexion altered by illness, and confinement, of which she knew—and his features impressed with an additional melancholy, of which she believed—that she was the cause—shew as so much affected that she could not speak,—but waved her hand in invitation towards a seat. He placed himself on the sofa by

her side,—took her hand, and, gently pressing it, congratulated her, in a mournful voice, on her apparently advanced recovery from her late alarm.

"And yet,"—he continued, "you are not quite so well as I hope you soon will be."

"O, Mr. Beaumont! from what a fate did you save me!—and at such a dreadful hazard of your own life!—what thanks!—what return——"

"Talk not of either, my dearest Madam; the deed, such as it is, confers its own reward in the consolation,—the blessing,—of having preserved a life so precious;—As for mine——"

"Why *that* is most precious—and yet, for my sake, you were ready to throw it away."

"And if I had actually thrown it away, sweet lady, after I had saved you, I should have lost but what has for some time been a burden and is now a torment to me."

He rested his head on his hand, and inquired, by looking into her countenance,

whether she was ready to receive the confidence which was half escaping from his lips. He met an answering look, which he felt assured was all made up of pity;—and resumed—

"May I unfold to you all the aching sorrows of my heart?—they will else destroy me."

"You may"—said the Baroness—trembling like a leaf.

"You have, surely, with that penetrating eye, discovered, through the disguise which he has worn, that the heart of your friend was not at rest."

"I have," said the Baroness, "and grieved that it should be so."

"Did you not conjecture—O, how my heart longs—yet dreads, to disclose itself!—Possibly it is a disclosure which I have no right to make, since it implicates not myself alone, but one whom I had rather die a thousand deaths, than offend;—one, whose exquisite delicacy makes me shrink at the very instant that I ask, whether you

have never conjectured that—love might be the hoarded grief?"

"I know not—I—I was at a loss to guess *what* it might be."

"It is no other," said Frederick—"and it is now, alas!—love without hope—without a dawn—almost without a possibility of success, or comfort."

The Baroness recalled to mind a late observation which he had made—that a gentleman (then alluded to,) could not, in Germany, *possibly* address a lady of rank highly superior to his own. She reflected that he well knew the prejudices of her brother on that subject, and that he might not know how entirely she was independent of that brother.

"But why," she falteringly asked—"so *very—very* desponding?"

"Because I have been banished from all I love, all I worship, by the mandate of a father—and now"—striking his hand on his forehead,—"the ocean rolls between us."

The Baroness cast upon him a momentary look of anguish, and amaze: her head fell backward, and she fainted away.

No—there are no words to express the feelings of Frederick Beaumont, when this long-hidden, unsuspected light first flashed upon his eyes.

Tender friendship — anguish—remorse for his involuntary crime, struggled for mastery in his soul—but his heart was filled with Helena alone.

Terrified as he was, at the long-continuing insensibility of the Baroness, he dared not call for assistance, lest any profane eyes should witness her agitation when she recovered.

"Dear, amiable, confiding creature!" said he, half-whispering as he pressed her for an instant to his heart,—"Wretch that I am!—what have I done?"

He laid her gently on the sofa, and, throwing up the nearest window, again returned to her, and was hanging over her, and endeavouring, in soothing accents, to

recall her to life, when she, at length, opened her eyes; but, instantly covering them with both her hands, and rising feebly, but hastily,

"Leave me, leave me, Mr. Beaumont," she cried, "I entreat you leave me to myself."—

"Heaven bless you with its choicest blessings!" he exclaimed—"my friend—my sister!" — and immediately left the house.

The Baroness confined herself for some days to her own apartment. She saw not even her brother, alleging to him, and to all visitors, and inquirers, that she was too ill to see any one.

Frederick had returned home with an heart nearly bursting with mingled griefs. He severely scrutinized his past conduct, and could now call to mind that, in his deportment toward the Baroness, softened as it had been by secret anguish,—an anguish, too, that found no solace but in her kindness,—a certain tenderness must have ap-

peared, which might, but too easily have thus misled her. Of any approach to the vanity of intentional conquest, his mind, his conscience, were as pure as on the day of his birth. But, modest and unpresuming as he was, he could now remember, that the manner and countenance of the Baroness, had taken somewhat of a new character, since his acquaintance with her had commenced. He could recall the blushing downcast looks with which she had, at times, received the warm, but simply intended praises, which his heart and tongue had bestowed upon her shining qualities. Then, the accidental *similarities* which had, at first, attracted his attention, he well remembered, had too often rivetted it; and he had gazed on those blue eyes with a stedfastness that might, he was sensible, too late, have been mistaken for admiration.

How to act, now, he was utterly at a loss to determine:—to depart from Vienna, (his father's business, as the Baroness well

knew, still unfinished,) and to leave her, and the Count, abruptly, would be presuming to attach too much consequence to the influence of his presence.' At length, he half resolved on waiting 'till he should receive some invitation from the Count, before he should again visit his house;—to avoid seeing the Baroness alone; and, at all events, never to betray a symptom of having understood the cause of her agitation.

The Count, in the mean time, alarmed at the serious indisposition of his sister, sent, in haste, for the family physician; for whom, not without great difficulty, he procured admittance to her.

The physician attended her repeatedly, but could find no symptom of bodily complaint, but what was immediately connected with the nerves, and delivered to the Count his decided opinion that the indisposition of the Baroness originated solely in the mind.

The Count had penetrated the secret of his sister, on the occasion of the appre-

hended duel, and the conversation which had succeeded to it. He thought himself no less sagacious with regard to Mr. Beaumont; and he respected him the more for the *silence* which he accepted as the homage of inferior rank At the same time, the character of Frederick had improved upon him as it approached nearer his inspection: the important service which he had rendered the Baroness, had greatly endeared him to her brother. Again, and again, he reflected that the happiness of his beloved sister was at stake. After revolving all these circumstances, and resolutely setting them in opposition to his prejudices respecting birth, and family, for some hours, during which he incessantly traversed his study, he ordered his carriage, and drove directly to the house of Mr. Beaumont; whom he found to his wish, alone.

He was at that instant engaged in the beloved occupation which, at the same time, ever afflicted and consoled him; he was writing to Helena, and the melancholy ex-

pression that appeared in his countenance, called forth the sympathy of Count Waldenberg's generous heart.

After mutual inquiries, and a very short preface, he proceeded to inform him, that he was come purposely to converse with him on an affair of the greatest delicacy; that he was not commissioned to enter into any negotiation whatever; but, that his regard for a noble family in Vienna, (Frederick was well known to many noble families) urged him to venture on a suggestion which might very deeply interest his happiness, and welfare.

"In short, Mr. Beaumont, you know our customs, and I have observed that you respect even our prejudices:—but there is a lady—a fair and noble lady—whose family, and, I have *some* reason to think, herself, would in consideration of your virtues, and high pretensions, in every point but one,—who would, I say—at least, I think—dispense with the difference of rank, and——"

The face of Beaumont was covered with the deepest scarlet, and his voice faltered, while he thus interrupted Count Waldenberg:

"My dear Lord, let me entreat you to go no further: I will not seek to discover the lady whose good opinion confers on me an honour so distinguishing,—but inform your Lordship, at once, that my love is, and has been, from the days of my earliest youth, entirely devoted to a lady from whom cruel circumstances have separated me for the present,—perhaps, for ever!" he added in much agitation; "but, present or absent—in life, or in death—I am absolutely, and unchangeably, hers."—

"Indeed, Sir!" said the Count, in amazement—"then surely, Mr. Beaumont——" but he recollected that the name of his sister had not escaped him, and he determined that now it should not: unavailing remonstrances on the past, and misconstrued attentions, could only wound the delicacy of her character, and, as he

thought, would extremely degrade himself. He also perceived, that Frederick was in a state of great perturbation, and appeared completely miserable; and he could not but acquit his candid, and noble nature of all intentional wrong.

Struggling, therefore, to conceal his mortification at an indignity that could not be matched in the annals of his family, he very *sincerely* assured Beaumont that he was deeply concerned at the useless trouble he had given him, by this conversation; and, with all the cordiality he could assume, politely took his leave.

CHAP. LXIX.

BEAUMONT now determined to absent himself for some time from Vienna; and immediately wrote to Count Waldenberg, stating that a call of business, connected with the affairs of his father, obliged him suddenly to leave the city, for an indefinite period; and in conclusion, expressing his hopes that he should find himself, and the Baroness, in perfect health, at his return. The interviews of the Baroness and her brother were short, and painful.—The Count dared not, and his sister would not, touch on the only subject that occupied the minds of each.

At the end of a fortnight, which he passed in solitude and sorrow, Beaumont returned to Vienna.

As soon as he could gain certain information that an evening assembly was ex-

pected at the house of the Count, he addressed to him a note, in which he invited himself to join the party. He was accepted.—After the compliments and inquiries which followed his first entrance, he feigned a peculiar interest in the subjects that were in general discussion, thus giving the Baroness time to recover from the trembling embarrassment which he could no longer misunderstand. He approached her but seldom during the whole evening; yet dared he not make a deviation too decisive from his usual habits; and truth to say, he had, on such occasions, been generally at her side.

The feelings of the Baroness, at this time, would offer a most distressing speculation to a tender and generous mind.—Such a mind will too readily imagine the conflict of delicacy, dignity, and disappointed love, which swelled her heart, which shook her frame; and while she was condemned to the torturing task of appearing calm, collected, and at ease,

overturned her peace from its foundation, and threw a darkening veil over the bright prospect of her future days.—

Beaumont, though loving, and beloved, was he many degrees happier ?—Alas, no! The stronger the mutual passion had grown, the more deep, and deadly were felt the strokes that had now assailed it. The higher had been his hopes, much the more profound was his disappointment; and this new-found anguish in the fatal affection of the Baroness had an ample share in the misery of him who was the object of it. Truly, and tenderly, esteeming her, Frederick felt his heart torn with regret for what he too well knew she must endure; and deeply disappointed on his own account, at the frustration of his last hope of comfort from the gentle sympathy, and judicious counsel of such a friend.—So far was he from receiving *this* consolation, that he had lost the sweet relief he had before enjoyed, in the kind cordiality, but lately considered by him as

the prelude to a mutual friendship. Reserve and constraint had necessarily taken their place, and he had never dared even to look forward to the pleasure of conversing with the Baroness alone, since the fatal morning which had betrayed to him the extent of her feelings. Yet, still dreading lest a marked alteration should offend both herself and her brother, he set forth, one morning, in the intention of visiting the Baroness; but determined to call, first, on Mr. Langton, and invite him to accompany him in his visit; and further, in case he should fail to meet with him, he took care to provide himself with a new book, that he might have a fair excuse for precluding conversation.—Among his papers, he also perceived the fragment which he had found in the ruined castle. He remembered, that he had related this adventure to the Baroness, and had promised, but forgotten to shew her the fragment. He put it into his pocket, and called on Langton,—but did

not find him at home.—He proceeded, however, to the house of Count Waldenberg, where the Baroness was still resident. Again, as he approached towards the house, he hesitated—and doubted; but, seeing Marsiglio also draw near, and reach the door before him, though he felt a peculiar dislike to him, he availed himself of his presence, and followed him in.—

After some general conversation,

"I have brought something to amuse you this morning," said Frederick, affecting a cheerfulness, most repugnant to his heart—"here is a new publication in your own language—will you judge of my proficiency? Signor Marsiglio is a perfect master of German, and he, also, may possibly, be entertained.—But let me first," added he with some earnestness, "read to you the fragment which I brought from the ruined Castle."

"By all means!"—said the Baroness—"you promised it to me long ago, and my curiosity has strengthened by delay."—

Frederick read: the Baroness was deeply interested in the story—and, now and then, her eyes would rest—upon the reader.

It chanced that she was regarding him with peculiar attention, when, in an impressive voice he gave these words, and at the same moment fixed his searching eye upon the face of Marsiglio:

"Shade of my murdered friend! where art thou now?" Marsiglio gave a start.—Frederick read on.—"Methought I beheld him—his features clad in the hue of death—in his breast the yawning wound of my sword."—The cheeks, the lips, of Marsiglio, became of an ashy white—his limbs shook—his knees knocked against each other; and while he still guarded his brow from a frown, he exclaimed:—"The description is too horrible, Sir; it has terrified the Baroness."

The Baroness turned deadly pale, and, with a faint shriek, fell back in her chair.—

"Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed Frederick, "why is she thus affected?—Dearest, dearest Madam!"—cried he, forgetting all cautions, and flying to support her—"why this? be composed, I entreat you—would I had not read this hateful scroll!"

So wished Marsiglio, who instantly left the room, to summon the Count, as he said, to her aid. But the Count, he well knew, was not in the house; then, leaving word with the servants that he was gone forth to seek him, for that the Baroness was ill again, he flew on the wings of Terror, to his own home.

The servants ran to the assistance of their Lady. After some time, she slowly revived.

"Is he gone?" cried she, with a look of horror.

"Signor Marsiglio is gone, Madam," said one of the servants; "and, as he said, to look for my Lord, and acquaint him with your illness."

"I am better," said the Baroness—"I want nothing at present."

The servants left the room, and again the Baroness was with Beaumont alone.

"How dreadfully have I distressed and affected you!" said he, with the tenderest kindness of voice; would I had read any thing else!"—

The Baroness shuddered, and looking mournfully at him,—"You cannot *guess* at the deed which you have unintentionally brought to light!"—

"Not quite unintentionally"—answered Beaumont. "I have, as you know, always disliked Marsiglio; and, ever since a small incident which took place one evening at your house, I have strongly suspected *mischief* in him. He was at cards: you saw him not; but I was nearly opposite to him, and watched the changing hues of guilt on his visage, when Langton spoke the words—'An Englishman 'cannot be an *assassin*.'—From that moment I marked *him* for one, and when I met him this morning, resolved to search him, by reading in his presence, the frag-

ment which I had chanced to put into my pocket for you. *Who* has fallen beneath his hand, I know not: by the agitation he has occasioned to you, I too plainly perceive you have more light upon the horrible subject."

"I have, indeed,"—said the Baroness: "Do you not remember, that, in answer to your question respecting him, on that same evening, I told you that he had been a favourite with my late Lord?"

"I do," cried Frederick, starting at the fearful conviction which struck upon his mind; "and you also told me, that you had reason to believe he had devoted his services to your Lord, on a very melancholy occasion."

"Till within *this hour*, I thought so," said the Baroness, "yet marvelled how his coward soul, (for such it had been proved) could have been capable of the assistance which though fruitlessly, he boasted to have afforded him. He even displayed some wounds: (though not, as you may

well imagine, dangerous ones,) which he asserted that he had received, in defending his friend, his benefactor, and such he truly was, from a party of banditti, who, he said, had murdered, and, as he affected to believe, robbed him.—O horrible monster! while he was—yes, I am satisfied that he was,—himself, the murderer!"—

The Baroness was, for some time, in too much agitation to proceed. — At length,

"And here," said she, "is the confirmation of these suspicions:—My Lord, who was a liberal, and good man, had left him by will, a noble legacy; but he well knew that the whole of his remaining property would be mine, and within a very few *weeks* of my widowhood, he pretended love to me, and dared to solicit my hand. My former objections to his manners, and character, were all strengthened by the offensive indelicacy of such early proposals. I rejected him with a kind of repugnance, which he has never forgiven."

"Is it impossible to detect this monster?" asked Frederick, after ruminating for some minutes: "Who attended the Baron, when he was attacked?"

"Marsiglio was the companion of my Lord, and they were attended by a servant of each, following, with led horses, the carriage of the Baron: when on their stopping to dine at a town, some forty miles from hence, the Baron's servant was so much intoxicated, that, when called for, he could not attend his Lord. Marsiglio's tale was, that he had accompanied the Baron, on horseback (Marsiglio's servant alone attending them) to visit a nobleman, at a neighbouring Castle, leaving the carriage, and the servant, who was incapacitated from following them, to the care of the postillions; that in passing through a wood, the Baron had been attacked by four ruffians, from whom both himself, and his servant, had sought to rescue him, but in vain: that he had, himself, at length, with difficulty escaped by flight, and feared that his servant had

shared the fate of the Baron.—Search was made for the bodies, but they were never found."

"And you have heard nothing more of the servant?"—

"Nothing," said the Baroness.

"Then all trace of the truth seems to be lost."—

"I fear so; and what a situation shall I now be in, while he is undetected—condemned to support his presence with a tranquil aspect, while my blood runs cold in my veins!"

"Heaven permits not the murderer to go to his grave in peace;" said Beaumont. "We must watch, but no longer seem to suspect, him. Yet, for *you* to be beset by such a fiend, as a familiar visitor!—I shudder at the bare idea: rather than so, I could wish him to take alarm, and disappear: but, might I be fortunate enough to detect him without hazard to you, I should feel that it were a deed of mercy to mankind, to give him up into the hands of justice."

CHAP. LXX.

MARSIGLIO confined himself to his house for the remainder of the day. The perturbation of his mind suffered him not to sleep:—ere the dawn of the following morning, he was on horseback, and, within an hour, had reached a rude, hanging hill, beneath which rough brambles, and tangled shrubs, nearly concealed a small, dark dwelling, somewhat larger, but not more lofty, than a cottage. The master of it was driving some cattle from a neighbouring yard, when Marsiglio rode up towards him.

"I must see you alone," said Marsiglio, in a gloomy voice. The man led the way to the house, and as he was entering—he overpowered the crying of a child within by vociferating,

"Make room there. I want to talk with the Signor."

"Will they not overhear us?"—asked Marsiglio.

"No, no, that brat makes such a noise, and Bertha keeps such a squalling to quiet it, that there is no fear;—but if you cannot be easy, I will send them a-grazing with the cattle."

He did so, and seated himself opposite to Marsiglio.

"There is some Imp of darkness at work against us, at Count Waldenberg's," said Marsiglio, with a brow in which no vestige of its well-practised serenity appeared.

"May *our* Imps forbid it!" answered Wolfinger.

"What *can* be at work, *but* demons?" —rejoined Marsiglio, "unless *you* have been *babbling*: no eyes of this world saw what we did, I'll be sworn."

"Not they, for you kept good watch, and looked ten ways at once, while we helped your friend into his last lodging."

At the word *friend*, Marsiglio stamped

with his foot;—"and I believe," continued Wolfinger, "there are not many lines long enough to fish him up again. But what have you *fancied*, to put you into such an ague-fit?"

Marsiglio then related the incident of the preceding morning, and described the piercing looks of Beaumont, while he had read the fragment. "And you turned pale, I warrant ye—plague on such runaway blood!—Have not you betrayed yourself—and me into the bargain?"

"You? No, Wolfinger—the Baroness had, in all probability, never seen you;—nor heard of you—'till she heard that you were demolished in assisting me to defend her husband."—"Methinks," continued he after a pause—"her refusing you after all, did not shew so much *gratitude* as you might have expected for your *friendly* struggles to preserve her husband's life."

"What, do you jeer me, sirrah?"—

"*Sirrah*, do you say!—take care, Signor Marsiglio;—you know you have not used me well—if you provoke me to *accuse*

you, I can save my own life; and as for my character—what matters that, since all I can do, now, is to *hide* it by pretending to be dead:—but, I pray you, tell me a little more of this new tribulation of yours: —what should this Englishman know of you—and why fix his *terrible* eye, when he read this old tale?"—

"I know not—unless because this *minion* of the Baroness's (on whom I will be revenged, or die), once before caught my eye, while the name of an assassin was hinted at as a term of reproach, and some unpleasant reflections might have made a little change in my countenance."

"Aye, there it was—and you will tell all, some unlucky day or other."

"No; no, no—but, good Wolfinger, you hinted that I have not used you well: —you know—well know—my wishes—my intentions—toward you; but the unlooked-for disappointment from the Baroness overset——"

"Yes, I know they overset you—and

turned me half out of the world; and you have taken good care that I shall not have money enough to live *in* it."

"Well, good Wolfinger—here is a purse for you, and you shall have another soon, to purchase more cattle, and prosper, good Wolfinger."

He took it—but, grinning, said—

"More cattle! no, no—I have enough of them. I'll have a jolly bout or two with it—and drink away care at the next town: nobody knows me with this rough coat, and shock head."

"But, Wolfinger, I must talk a little further with you: one stroke more—or we are not *safe*, Wolfinger.

"Wilt thou not help me to be revenged on this Beaumont, who has crossed me at every step, from the first moment that he appeared among us; and whom, I tell thee, the Baroness loves; for which my pride shall not forgive him: besides, though I love *her* no longer, I adore her fortune. And now, he dares, in his heart, to ac-

cuse me—I 'll be sworn he does:—moreover, I know he hates me:—there is no hate lost:—I tell thee, I would have his heart, revenge, and safety."

"Take them, then; but do your bloody work yourself:—I 'll no more on 't:—as to a little cheating or robbing, or so—I don't matter it; but, murder 's a bad business; and I don't always sleep well o'nights for thinking on 't."

"You will not, then——"

"No—and *you dare* not," muttered Wolfinger. Marsiglio affected not to hear the last words; but after some time, profoundly ruminating, resumed:

"What *will* you do for me, then?—some help I must have:—suppose—suppose you sell off your cattle—dress yourself like a gay valet again—only shaving your whiskers—wearing a patch over your cheek,—or whatever you will to disguise yourself. Contrive to entice away his present valet to a better place, and get yourself hired in his room; you can then smile yourself into

his confidence—intercept his letters—find out his projects—and—if you will not betray him to his death, you may, at least, give me the means of torturing him alive."

"And what will you give me for all this?"—

"Gold—gold—in showers, Wolfinger."

"And what security beforehand?"

"Promise to serve me—to do it immediately—let the money I gave you go to maintain your family here—and come to me, as soon as you have arranged every thing, and equipped yourself for your new character,—and I will give you another purse double the value of the last, and sign a promise for whatever you shall demand, and I can pay, while you remain in his employ—and *mine*."

"Well—I am yours—while you are constant to your bond—no longer."

"Fear not—I will be true to every tittle:—give me but to plague that Englishman, that crushes my powers, charms men's hearts, and women's eyes, and looks

me into nothing,—and I will worship thee. And now,—about it quick—and dress thy face in honesty—soften the rough tones thou hast contracted in the woods—enter the world again—and hold thy head erect, as I do."

Marsiglio returned to Vienna, mixed in society as usual, was more studious than ever to appear engaging, and at ease. In a short time, all was arranged, according to the plan he had proposed; and Wolfinger, under the name of La Pierre, prófessing himself a Swiss, was the valet of Frederick Beaumont.

CHAP. LXXI.

The first letter which fell into the treacherous hands of the pretended La Pierre, was from Mr. Melcombe, enclosing one from Helena—the first which she had been able to write, since the arrival of the dreadful prohibition from Mr. Beaumont, and Mrs. Villiers's consequent decision.

Its contents were these:—

"*May* 15.

"I have been very ill, my dear friend. After I had, as I thought, in some measure recovered the first shock of your father's letter, I had a relapse, which proved worse than the first attack.—My poor mother was dreadfully alarmed; and as for myself, I believed—O Frederick! suffer me to say, I *hoped*—that I was descending to the grave. It was for your sake that I wished it: for where, now, can we ever hope

to meet, except in Heaven?—and how, in the mean time, am I to bear the burden of existence?—Your letters, your inestimable letters, are all my consolation. Deeply as they wound me, by speaking of your sufferings, from absence, and disappointment, yet, what a balm is contained in their assurances of your unabated love!—they also give me relief on your own account, by assuring me that you receive all the consolation that friendship, and kindness, can afford, from your noble friends, Count Waldenberg, and the Baroness of Linzendorf; whose characters rise in my admiration, the more closely you bring them to my acquaintance. Once did I hope, though faintly, and fearfully, that the day might come when I, too, should be their friend; when I should have *authority* to thank them for their multiplied attentions to you. Now—I hope nothing: —my tears blind me.—Frederick, was I ever gay, and happy?—O yes—*how* happy! —but I must hasten to conclude this sad indulgence of unavailing sorrow;—I feel

that it is hurting me,—that it unfits me for the task, the indispensable *duty*, of living, and even appearing at ease, for my mother's sake:—never had I a task so difficult before:—do you know that I find it more practicable to bury my feelings in enforced smiles, than in the calm interchange of cheerful conversation? Yes — I find it easier to affect *merriment*, than happiness; and yesterday—can you believe it? I made my mother smile, by what she called one of my old saucinesses. I smiled also—while my heart was *breaking*.

"I have scarcely ventured to exchange a word with her, on the painful subject of her determination, respecting the future; yet, I cannot but hope that she would not be inexorable, in the event of a recantation from your father. To my late illness and sufferings, I believe I am indebted for her permission to continue our correspondence, at least 'till you hear again from India, in reply to your last letters. To whatever she decrees, I must submit my actions;

but my heart is in the disposal of no earthly power but - - - - - yours.

"My dear mother is not yet satisfied respecting my health. She has written an account of all the late occurrences to Mrs. Morley, and that kind friend has informed her that Mr. Morley and herself are going, in a month's time, to Hastings, for the greater part of the summer. They have most kindly pressed us to visit them at that place, pleading that it may benefit my health; and holding out a chance of their returning hither with us, in compliance with my dear mother's invitation of last year. My mother is delighted at the plan, in the hope that it may be of essential service to me. I readily consent, because she wishes it.—In every other view, if I *have* a choice with respect to the place in which I am to pass my mournful days, I could wish that it might be in this solitude.

"Your delicacy in not confiding the story of our sorrows, even to your amiable friend the Baroness, gratifies—pleases—I

had almost said *rejoices* me;—but I sickened at the word!—Farewell! faithful, and dear friend, farewell!—continue to enclose your letters to Mr. Melcombe, who will immediately forward them. We shall go in about six weeks, or but a few days later; certainly as soon as Mrs. Morley shall be ready to receive us. Again, unwillingly, I say farewell!

"Yours, unchangeably,

"HELENA VILLIERS."

"P.S. I can well comprehend the dislike you feel towards Marsiglio. As you describe him, his character appears to form a perfect contrast with your own; and I think, with you, that mischief lurks under his smiles."

"Aye, truly does it—most precious mischief"—cried the triumphant hypocrite, as he finished the letter, and doubled the fee which had been thrown to La Pierre, when he delivered it to his employer.

"This,"—he continued—"tells me *all* that I want to know. Beaumont, it is evident, returns not the Baroness's love;—for that she *does* love him I'll be sworn:—but here is the idol that *he* adores, and *her* will I make the agent of my revenge. He dislikes me—suspects me—lays prostrate my conscious soul by the very glance of his eye.—O Wolfinger! use thy dagger for me—it will be safest for us both, *good* Wolfinger—and command half my fortune!"

"Call me not *good* Wolfinger; however, I am not *all* devil yet:—I will *not* kill him:—I told you so, before I saw him; and now, he is kind to me—and I won't do *worse* than *betray* him; *that* I have promised, and so I'll keep faith with you.—Have you any thing more for me to do?"

"Bring me all the letters that are in the hand-writing of either of these two letters:—these," said Marsiglio:—"note them well, and take care to be in the way at the post hour:—most especially, let

none that Beaumont writes escape you; and fail not to bring me all that he addresses to either of these names"—pointing out to his agent the signatures of Helena, and Mr. Melcombe.

Wolfinger promised, and departed.

Again, and again, the eyes of Marsiglio profaned the soft effusions of sweet Helena's love. Having fully possessed himself of the secret, hitherto so devoutly guarded, and made notes of all particulars which it was most important for him to remember, the ruthless Italian tore the precious scroll, which Beaumont would have purchased with all his wealth,—and carefully committed the fragments to the flames.

"Fair spirit," cried he, "I will meet thee at Philippi, but not as the *hated Marsiglio!*"

Time rolled on: the affair which Frederick had undertaken to transact for his father, began to wear a more favourable aspect, and was drawing to a close; but

his exertions grew every day more irksome to him, as he hoped—and hoped—but hoped in vain, for a letter from Helena,

"Not a line from her," said he, "since the dreadful letter from her mother!—and she was then ill, and afflicted!—oh agony! —how may it not be with her now!"

He wrote again—and again—and ever in the fondest terms of half-distracted anxiety, and love; but the letters, entrusted to the traitor La Pierre, who affected a caution amounting to preciseness, respecting them, were all carried to Marsiglio, and shared the same fate with the first.

One morning Frederick ordered his horse, in the hope of indulging his own sad reflections, secure from the tumult and business of the town; telling La Pierre, as he had frequently done before, that he should not need his attendance.

"I wish that you should be in the way, in case any letters should arrive, if they do, lock them up carefully."

"You may depend on it, Sir."

Frederick gave the reins to his horse, being indifferent as to the course he should take, and checking him only when he seemed inclined to quicken his pace. He had ridden slowly on some miles from the city, when the horse turned his head towards an open door, at which sat a pretty young woman, bitterly weeping over a child that lay in her lap. Frederick tenderly asked her the cause of her distress.

"My husband has run away from me," returned the young woman, "and my child has been ill this fortnight, and I have no money to buy medicines—hardly enough to buy food"—and her tears and lamentations redoubled. A woman, and an infant, in affliction, in want!—It was enough, it was too much, for Frederick.—Instantly he leaped from his horse, and having fastened him to a tree, began to soothe, and comfort the unfortunate girl, and, taking out some gold pieces, presented them to her, entreating her to compose her spirits, and to depend on his further assistance, if necessary.

The young woman looked up at her benefactor, her eyes running over with delight and gratitude.

The gentle benevolence of his countenance, his voice, his manners, gave him, she thought, the appearance of something more than human.

"Is it long since your husband left you?" asked Frederick: "surely, he will return again; he must have a hard heart indeed who could entirely desert you and this pretty innocent."

"It is some time since he left me, Sir; he gave me money, telling me that he would come again, before long: when I asked him whither he was going, he said that was nothing to me, and bade me mind my own business and take care of the child, and he would give me money enough.—Then, he came again, two or three times, and gave me a little money, which is now all gone, and he does not come any more, Sir. If it was not for this poor child, I would go and seek a service;

but I cannot leave it to perish in the woods"—and again she began to weep,—again Frederick entreated her to be composed, and to live in hopes that her husband would return, but charging her, if he should, to say nothing of the trifling relief he had afforded her, as he wished it to be additional to whatever she might receive from her husband. "Take your child immediately," added he, "to the next town, for the best advice you can procure, and purchase whatever you want; depend on it I will see you soon again; but do not on any account, mention that you have seen me now."—

So saying, he mounted his horse, and, by a long circuit, returned to Vienna.

CHAP. LXXII.

BEAUMONT avoided, as much as was possible, without the appearance of affectation, the house of Count Waldenberg, while the Baroness remained there, and proposed to himself, as soon as the business of his father should be concluded, to ramble onward to some distant part of the Continent. Yet, at times, he felt it necessary to join the parties to which he was, though of late infrequently, invited by the Count. It was but seldom that he conversed particularly with the Baroness; but with the deepest concern he marked the struggles of her mind, to dress her face in smiles, while he could at intervals discern the settled character of pensiveness into which that face had fallen.

Marsiglio, too, was there; but Frederick guarded his eye from resting on him, excepting at such moments when he was

assured that Marsiglio was not observing him. Few were those moments. The thoughts of Marsiglio never strayed from Beaumont: and possessed as he was of the very heart and soul of his victim, it was not difficult for so accomplished a deceiver to make his own advantage of the most trifling of Beaumont's actions.

One evening it chanced that he was particularly requested by Count Waldenberg to join a party at whist, with three other gentlemen, who played high, and were deep in the science of the game.—Frederick consented;—he won, and was informed by the opposite party that he must give them another chance.—He lost more than he had won; but Marsiglio, who stood by, declared that having observed his play, he would bet on his final success, if he would continue the contest. Bets ran high. Count Waldenberg requested him to go on, and one of his adversaries offered to stake a considerable sum against him.

Indifferent whether he lost or won, and glad to persevere in any employment to which he was necessitated to fix his attention, he still complied: he played well; but he cards were against him, and he lost all.

A few evenings after this, he made one of a party, at the house of a friend of Count Waldenberg: the Count, and the Baroness, being also of the company; as was the *ever* present Marsiglio. A dance was suddenly proposed, and instantly agreed to.—A lively married lady of a certain age, with whom Frederick was well acquainted, proposed to dance the Waltz with him.—This was too much:—he alleged that it was "impossible—he had never danced the Waltz—he was ill—he was lame—his head was disordered by a violent pain of the preceding day."—The last plea was a true one;—but no excuses were admitted.—The lady "would *teach* him."—

It was a martyrdom—but he yielded;

and, hints from this, and the former evening, were added to the *notes* of Marsiglio.

Frederick forgot not his promise to the sorrowing mother of a deserted child. Again he went alone to visit her; carried her a larger sum of money than before, —for he was always most liberally supplied by the agents of his father,—and again consoled her with the voice of kindness, and humanity.

"Have you seen your husband yet?" he inquired.

"Alas! no, Sir: and, but for your bounty, I should, before now, have been reduced to begging or starving, for this poor child has taken up all my time in nursing it.—Thank God, and thank you, Sir, it is almost well now."

"I am glad to hear it and to perceive it;" answered Frederick; "for the sweet Innocent looks in full health and beauty. I believe I must now tell you where to find me, lest your husband should not return, and you should be again in distress."

He wrote his name and address, with his pencil, and giving it to her, bade her to be careful of it, but, for the reasons before mentioned, not to shew it to her husband; and, with this injunction, he left her.

On the eve of the day on which Marsiglio was to depart on his infamous projects, he summoned his tool of mischief, and having newly rewarded him for betraying his master, which he had done most faithfully, by bringing to Marsiglio every letter which he had written since the compact, he gave him his last charges of care and caution, and directed him to forward whatever might arrive after his departure, to the post-office at Hastings, in England, addressed to him under the name of Weber:—for, to prevent discovery, he meant to pass for a Prussian of that name, being well acquainted both with the country of Prussia, and its language.—He departed before daybreak, alone, and in the most private manner

possible, no one except La Pierre, knowing whither he was gone.

Some days had elapsed, before Beaumont, Count Waldenberg, or the Baroness, heard of his departure. The Baroness had communicated to her brother the suspicions entertained respecting Marsiglio, by herself and Beaumont; and this sudden disappearance, which had very much the air of a flight, gave strength to those suspicions in the mind of each.

Count Waldenberg now ventured to converse with Frederick on what had passed:—they deeply regretted the escape of Marsiglio, and determined that, whenever, or wherever, they should have an opportunity of making further discoveries, they would unite in obliging him to answer to their charges, should they ever find him more: concluding with the hope, that the day would yet arrive, when he should be brought to a well-merited, and exemplary punishment.

This conversation had taken place at

the house of the Count: it was the first morning on which Frederick had made a voluntary call there, since that on which the fragment had been read in the presence of Marsiglio. Just as they had come to the conclusion before mentioned, the Baroness returned from a morning drive, and entered the drawing-room, where Frederick was conversing with the Count. She slightly started on seeing him; but recollecting herself immediately, took a seat. The Count was, soon after, called out of the apartment; and Frederick made some efforts towards general conversation. The Baroness observed that her brother did not return; and, at the same time, recollected the painful moment in which Frederick had been entering on a confidence to which he had never since had an opportunity of giving utterance. She reflected that if she never reminded him of this intended confidence, he would too well divine the cause: "Alas!" said she mentally, "is he not already too well informed - - - - yet

if I am silent, he will conclude that I make no struggle against the weakness of my own heart."—At length summoning to her aid all the dignity of her mind, and suppressing all its emotions, she said—

"My good friend, you once honoured me by expressing a wish—a hope—that you might find relief from the sorrows which oppressed you, by communicating them to me:—you cannot doubt but that I would most faithfully guard the secret, partake your griefs, and ardently,—most ardently—pray for the happy termination of them."

Frederick dared not raise his eyes:—he thanked, he blessed, her sympathy, her friendship:—he reflected that by no other method could he so gently soothe the disappointment of the Baroness, or so well account to her for the depth, and strength, of the passion which wholly possessed him, and his total insensibility to every woman but one, as by unfolding to her the whole story of his affection, its birth, infancy, and maturity, even to the present

agonizing moment, when all was dark and blank before him !—

The Baroness was profoundly attentive, and her eyes

> " Dropp'd tears as fast as the Arabian trees
> Their medicinal gum."——

The name, the qualities, the attractions, of Helena Villiers, were all imparted, and described—all lodged, with sacred reverence, and received with all that might be termed the *innocent* part of envy, in the bosom of the Baroness.

With a warmth, a liberality of heart for which the soul of Frederick did her homage, she devoted her wishes to his felicity; and, putting to eternal silence all self-interested, and unavailing regrets, she gave him the most fervent assurances of her friendship, and should any unlooked-for event render it necessary, her protection, to the dear, and cherished object of all his earthly hopes.

Beaumont could not coldly hear this:—he

could not, at that moment, resist catching the hand of the generous speaker, and imprinting on it one kiss of tender gratitude—of perfect friendship—of a brother's love.

The Baroness drew back her hand.—Her task was now accomplished, and she entreated him to leave her, as she was in momentary expectation of the Count's return, and the confidence which she had received being wholly exclusive, she should be unable to explain to him the traces of those tears, which the preceding communications had drawn from her eyes.

CHAP. LXXIII.

About a fortnight afterward, as Frederick was, one day, entering his dressing-room, he perceived a part of a torn letter lying on the ground. Believing it to be some paper of his own, he stooped to pick it up, but perceiving that it was ill written, and worse spelt; and concluding that it was a letter of La Pierre's, he was carelessly throwing it on the table—when his eye was caught by the magic name of Helena Villiers. In a transport of eagerness and amaze, he read on: the letter was torn down the middle; but he could perceive that, after the words, "Miss Helena Villiers," followed "the gayest lady in all the town." In the next lines he read, "Lord Edgeworth's phaeton"—"walking on the parade"—"the ladies talk—of nothing else"—"prettiest creature ever I see."—

Frederick, with staring eyes, read it again, and again.

"'Tis false!" cried he in a burst of rage, and furiously rang the bell.

"Whence comes this infernal scroll, sirrah?"—to La Pierre.

La Pierre looked at it.

"O Sir, the writing is bad enough to be sure:—I—I received it from an old acquaintance who is in a place—a gentleman's place."—

"*What* gentleman, Sir?"

"I don't know indeed, Sir,—for he only says that he is in a very good place, and travelling all about England, Sir—and he wrote to tell me, Sir, what a fine place England is for servants, Sir—and to advise me to go there too, Sir—but having such a kind, worthy, English gentleman for a master, Sir, I need not think of going, I am sure, and so I should have told him, Sir,—only he never told me where to direct to him, Sir."

"Was there no post-mark on the letter?"

"O yes! I suppose there was, Sir;—but I—I never looked about that, Sir—and as the letter did not signify at all, Sir, I tore it up to make the fire burn, Sir, and I thought it was all gone—I did indeed, Sir; —I hope no offence, Sir."

Frederick was again studying the letter, to see whether the statement of La Pierre was true, that it was written in recommendation of the situation of servants in England—he perceived, from the disjointed sentences, that it was.—He looked for the name of the writer. It was John Smith.

A servant of the name of John Smith travelling through a town in England, gave no gleam of light towards discovery. He dismissed La Pierre; and, still ruminating on these strange, and hideous characters,

"She is alive, then, and in health," said he aloud, catching a ray of comfort amid the gloom; if there be *any* truth in this"—and again reading it over—

"No, 't is slander."

Again he endeavoured to consider what

was possible to be done: that there was falsehood somewhere, he felt assured;—but where?—no suspicion lighted on the careful, steady, humble, *honest* La Pierre—whom, on the contrary, he felt remorse for having spoken to with sharpness, and vehemence, in the first agonizing perturbation of his mind. All he could devise to be possible, and expedient, was to write yet again to Mr. Melcombe, enclosing the torn remnant of the letter,—imploring information respecting the real state and residence of Helena, and describing to him the horrible anarchy of his mind, and heart, while he waited for further intelligence. This letter he, as usual, committed to the careful custody of La Pierre, who faithfully forwarded it to his employer.—

Frederick traversed his apartment for hours, still ruminating on the impossible information of the letter;—yet—"with his mind's eye," he beheld Lord Edgeworth by the side of Helena:—he could not escape the sight.—He took from his pocket-

book those few lines which she had written to him in Monmouthshire, in answer to his own, assuring her of eternal constancy. Hers he had called his "talisman" against all future possible doubts, or fears. He kissed them—he placed them on his heart—but he had no sleep all that night.

He went not near his only confidante:—no—the Baroness should never know that he could doubt Helena—and "*could* he?" —"did he?"—"God forbid!" said he;—yet the possibility that his fears might not be groundless, rendered society distasteful to him, and he secluded himself entirely within his own house; 'till worn down with agitation, he sought a freer air, beyond the precincts of the town. Hour after hour, he would slowly wander with folded arms, and eyes fixed on the ground, and sometimes he would throw himself down in the most sequestered spot he could find, hiding his face from the charms of nature, and the light of heaven. At length unable any longer to support his own reflections, he

one day, rushed into the streets, to lose the sense of them in a crowd.

He paced them with hurried steps for several hours.—Near the entrance of a church door, a woman, whose head-dress was drawn closely round, and concealed her face, put a small slip of paper into his hand, and disappeared. He opened it, and read these words:

"For Heaven's sake, most honoured Sir, come to-morrow morning towards the cottage where you found me and my child in misery, and relieved us. You are betrayed:—but if you would not have me murdered, be silent:—behave as usual to La Pierre.

"I will watch for you near the cottage:—do not enter it 'till I have met, and spoken to you."

Frederick crushed the paper in his hand, hid it in his bosom, and returned home, his heart beating with anxiety and expectation.

"La Pierre, then, is a villain," said he

mentally—"Heaven be praised, he is a villain!—and the slander against Helena is *certainly* a stratagem:—yet how?—why?"—

The next morning he contrived a variety of messages, and commissions, for La Pierre, and gave him his directions for the execution of them, just before the hour of the post, desiring that he would set out immediately. La Pierre, for the first time, was embarrassed;—he busied himself in arranging the chairs,—wiping, again, and again, the table from which he had removed the breakfast—and, at last, ventured to inquire whether he might not brush his Honour's clothes, before he went out. A tremendous "No"—was on the lips of Beaumont;—but, steadily commanding his voice, and countenance, he calmly told him "that he might leave whatever he had to do 'till his return, for that he wished him to lose no time in purchasing the articles he had ordered, lest they should be gone.—

La Pierre left the room;—but Frederick

perceived that he still lingered; fearful however, of raising suspicion, he forbore, for some time, to hasten him. At last, he rang—

"La Pierre, are you not gone yet?"

"I am going this moment, Sir."

He departed; and in a quarter of an hour the post arrived. Frederick snatched his hat, as if he was going from the house, and reached the door before any other person was in motion to attend it.—A letter was put into his hands. It was from Mr. Melcombe. He flew back with it to the room he had left—tore it open—and letting it drop, read the enclosure, which was from Helena.

It contained only these few words—

"Frederick—do you live? why, then, this dreadful silence?—after such a letter as I wrote you two months ago—not *one* line in answer? I am not well: perhaps you are ill:—perhaps your father's command—not to think of Helena Villiers: O Frederick! I cannot write:—I dare not

reflect. We came hither last night. Direct to the post-office, Hastings.

"H. V."

"Eternal confusion on the head of him who has done this!" cried Frederick, pressing to his tortured heart the lines which spoke to it in words that seemed to burn their way.—"O angel innocence! who is—who can be—*thy* enemy?—*thy* tormentor?—Whither is that precious letter gone?—where are my own letters?—Some one must have set on this specious villain to betray me.—

"Hah! *where* is *Marsiglio?*"——and, in a moment, the possibility that he might be fled to England—that he might be possessed of the letters,—the sacred secrets of his own heart, and that of his beloved—the horrible suggestions of his imagination almost disordered his brain—and he determined not to delay for an instant his interview with the young woman who *seemed* to be his friend,—though he now suspected every one:—first,

however, catching up Mr. Melcombe's letter, he found *that*, also, couched in the same language of affectionate complaint, for his long, and mysterious silence. He deposited both the letters in his pocket-book, and, going himself to hire an horse, that his treacherous servant might not even know he had left the town, he went with all possible expedition to the cottage of Bertha;—for she it was whom his bounty had relieved, and who had given him the short notice before mentioned.

She met him, as she had promised, at some little distance from her own house—told him that "all was safe," and invited him to enter; then, closing the door, and throwing herself on her knees, she implored him "to forgive her husband for what he had been guilty of against him, and which her gratitude for his pity, and beneficence, was urging her to declare to him."

Beaumont told her he would "forgive much for her sake," but entreated her to

lose no time in telling all, ere his senses forsook him. "I have already," said he, "imbibed suspicions which - - - - - - Is not La Pierre your husband?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Then, I *know* that he has betrayed me; he has possessed himself of my letters. All I want to know of you, is,—for what end;—and this I implore you to tell me."

"O! I should be a monster if I did *not*," cried Bertha—"and indeed, indeed, Sir, he is not so base a villain as the one that set him on;—as—Marsiglio."

"I thought so!" cried Frederick, starting up in a paroxysm of rage;—"but tell me, I charge you, one thing, instantly:—*where* is Marsiglio?"

"In England," said Bertha, trembling at the aspect of Frederick.—She entreated him not to be angry with *her*, for that she was almost exhausted; having walked the whole way to Vienna the day before, to give him that note, and walked back in the dawn of morning, lest she should be dis-

covered; and also because she had been obliged to leave her child under the care of a neighbour.

The humane and kind-hearted Frederick asked her forgiveness—loaded her with thanks, and blessings, and, suppressing all his agonizing agitations, seated himself, with apparent composure, and once more entreated her to tell him all she knew.

"I have told you, Sir," she began, "that my husband left me, without telling me whither he was going, or when he should return.

"His real name is Wolfinger:—under that name I met with him, about a year and a half ago. Of his life, before that time, I know very little.

"Signor Marsiglio"—again the storm gathered on Frederick's brow—but he dispersed it—"Signor Marsiglio," said Bertha, "set him up in this house,—gave him some cattle—and we were married.

"He has not been kind to me:—he is rough, and rude, at home;—yet I have

seen him so very civil—so very *humble* to strangers!—

"He used to wear a rough coat, and his hair short, while he lived at home; but when he went, as I have lately discovered, to live with you, Sir, he changed his appearance as you see, and when he came to visit me, I hardly knew him.—

"Since the first time I saw you, Sir, he has been here but once; and that was only four days ago. I told him how much I had been distressed for money—told him of the child's illness. He said I teased him to death for money. I mentioned nothing of you, Sir, as you ordered me. At last, he said he must have something to drink. I told him I had nothing in the house: so then, he said he must go and find it where he could: so, Sir, he went to a publick-house about a quarter of a mile off; and when he came back again, he could hardly stand; I perceived that he had drank very freely. He said he should stay all night."

Frederick remembered that he had re-

quested permission for a night's absence; alleging that he had a friend to visit at some distance.

"When he was going to bed, he took out his handkerchief, and in so doing, dropped a letter which, in the situation he was in, he did not perceive. I took up the letter, and was much surprised to see that it was addressed to La Pierre at your house, Sir. I knew Signor Marsiglio's hand-writing in the direction, and doubted not that this name was, for some strange purpose, adopted by my husband. I had good reasons not to think well of the characters of either of them. Your kindness, your merciful bounty, struck upon my heart;—I dreaded that there was mischief plotting against you: I secured the letter, and determined, at all risks, to deliver it to you; and there it is, Sir;—I am sure you will protect me from the fury of my husband. I dreaded his asking for it, on his coming again.

"I waited here three days; so I concluded

that if he had missed it, he was afraid to come this way to inquire for it under a false name, especially as he had been at the publick-house, and would suppose it possible he had dropped it there."

Bertha might have talked for ever without interruption.—From the moment he had taken the letter into his hands, he had heard nothing that she said.

Its contents were these:

Letter to La Pierre.

"I have received all your letters, and their important enclosures, and you shall not repent the zeal with which you fulfil your trust. Continue to take charge of *all* that come under your hands from the same quarter; but, send no more to me 'till you hear further. What you may have already sent will probably find me here, for another week, by the usual address; but, if my plans succeed, by the return of this post there will be no trace of *Mr. Weber* here, nor shall I have any further occasion

for your assistance. Good Wolfinger, go on and prosper. Depend upon hearing of me again, and rely on the friendship and protection of

"M."

"Take great care of the enclosed, and forward it immediately."

Within this epistle was enclosed a sealed letter, directed to the Sieur Wieberg.

Frederick hesitated not to tear it open. It had no date either of time or place.

"My sudden flight from Vienna must have surprised you extremely. I had many reasons for departing privately, and I should have found it difficult to explain to you the *immediate* intention of my journey, for I was not precisely acquainted with it myself.

"I have now, however, found the worshipped object of the proud B——'s heart, and through her shall *my* heart reach its long-sought revenge. I have, by gentle degrees, insinuated myself into the family

with whom she now resides, and I begin to hope, into her good opinion. My attentions to her are of such a respectful unpresuming nature, that she suspects me not of having even considered whether she is handsome or otherwise: to you I will say that she is, not only exquisitely beautiful, but alluring!—intoxicating!—and, so fully does she possess my mind, that I had almost said, my revenge on B—— is become a secondary consideration. Yet—she is neither well nor happy. She pines after this detested B——; I am convinced she does. I am endeavouring to undermine her confidence in him at least. I speak to her of Germany, but I *profess* never to have been at Vienna. I read to her however, certain letters, which I write from a friend passing a few days there in the course of his travels: letters in which he hints that all the talk is of the intended marriage of the English gentleman Mr. B—— with the B—ss of L——; how the Count, her brother, objected—how he was

over-ruled: how Mr. B—— dances the Waltz, plays deep, &c.—

"This was however going somewhat too far: she was affected by it, even to fainting, and I have never seen her since."

Frederick threw down the letter, and beating his forehead with both his hands, imprecated curses on the head of the writer. Again he continued the soul-harrowing perusal—

"I have sounded her character, but can find no weak side in it; no hope of moving her principles or her love. Yet mine she shall be. I have a plot upon her humanity which I think cannot fail.

"But I am so lost in this absorbing subject, that I neglect to inquire into your concerns, which, yet, believe me, I forget not, any more than my debt to you.

"How has fortune dealt with you, since we parted? It is impossible for me in the narrow space wherein I now move, and where I have such a character to support, to do any thing in the way of retrieving

vast losses: but I write this to certify you that I am not out of reach, and that I trust in good luck hereafter for repaying you all.

"As our *faithful* La Pierre always knows where to find you, I enclose this to him, and you may safely answer by the same channel. Observe—I trust *him* with nothing but the care of letters, and I would wish you to reiterate the cautions I have given him never to neglect the speedy and proper disposal of them.

"I am

"Yours sincerely,

"M."

CHAP. LXXIV.

The raging tortures of Frederick Beaumont now equalled what Marsiglio himself could have wished for him; and a lioness robbed of her young was a feeble image of his wrath. To arrange his ideas sufficiently to form any decisive plan of conduct surpassed his power. One only thought possessed him—to reach Marsiglio!—"and then—but O the world of earth, and seas, that must retard that moment!"—

The poor Bertha kneeled, wept, implored him to be calm;—entreated him to consider what would become of her, if she was known to Marsiglio, and Wolfinger, as the betrayer of their secrets.

"You shall never see them more!" cried Frederick, regarding her with a wild look of pity:—"You shall go instantly to the Baroness of Linzendorf, and place yourself,

and your child, under her care. She will protect you. Can you furnish me with pen, ink, and paper?"

She brought him a scrap of paper, and a pen, with which, in the present state of his nerves, he could just make these words intelligible:—

"The bearer of this will tell you a tale of Marsiglio, and Wolfinger (who is her husband), which has driven me nearly to distraction. I entreat you to conceal this poor woman, and her child, 'till I can see you. Her story is closely connected, though she knows it not, with *our suspicions*. O thou doubly infamous Marsiglio! I must fly to England—but I will see you first. I know not what I have written—I know nothing but that I am miserable.

"FREDERICK BEAUMONT."

Delivering this note to Bertha, and directing her how to find the Baroness, he advised his trembling companion to depart immediately.

"But you will be wearied"—said he—"while the road is, as here, retired, and unfrequented, you shall ride my horse, and I will walk by your side."

She gratefully complied, and, taking the child in her lap, they proceeded together for some miles,—Beaumont, all the while, lost in gloomy meditation, from which he would sometimes start into half-muttered imprecations on the fiends who had betrayed him.

At length, they parted.—Frederick rode his horse to the place from whence he had taken it, and walked home; preparing himself for his approaching meeting with the pretended La Pierre. He opened the door to him.—Frederick passed him in silence.—La Pierre began to recount the success of his commissions.

"I will ring for you presently," said Frederick in a tranquil voice.

He loaded a small pistol, and hid it in his pocket. He then rang the bell. La Pierre entered—Beaumont locked the door,

and took out the key;—then looking full in the face of the culprit,

"Tell me, *good* Wolfinger, *who* assisted Marsiglio to murder the Baron of Linzendorf?"—

Wolfinger shook as if an earthquake had rocked the ground.

"I—I—I—how should I know, Sir?—I—I—did not know he had murdered him—are you sure he murdered him, Sir?"—

Frederick had gained his first point, which was that of, at once, confounding La Pierre, by seeming to know the atrocious fact which he only suspected, and now pursued his advantage.

"Yes—traitor—I am sure;—and that *thou* wert that vile associate: therefore confess *all*; and tell me where are all the letters thy fangs have seized upon, or in an instant, breathe thy last."—Then, snatching out the pistol, he seized with one hand the sturdy arm of Wolfinger, and, with the other, presented the pistol at his face, and held it there, notwith-

standing his vigorous struggles to push it aside.

"O stop! stop! stop!" cried the terrified wretch, "and I will confess all."

"Be quick, then," cried Frederick, "and take heed that thy tale agrees with what I *know*. One falsehood—one prevarication—and thou art *dead*."

Beaumont then threw himself into a chair,—the pistol still in his hand—and the culprit accurately confessed all that the reader already knows. Then, throwing himself on his knees, he implored of Beaumont protection from Marsiglio;—and "O, Sir,—do not—do not give me up to justice!—you see, Sir, I am not quite so bad as Marsiglio, since I did,—indeed I did, Sir,—refuse to murder you."

"And if you had *only* murdered me, O God! I had forgiven you!—did you not consent to betray me?—to torture me?—to tear me piecemeal, by giving up that Angel into the power of the blackest devil - - - - - Oh! where, where, now—" and

he seemed to lose himself in the most gloomy, and horrible reflections.

"He is a monster, Sir! and I am sure I wish I had never seen his face."

"Did *he* occasion you to leave your wife and child to starve?" asked Frederick, roused by the last words of Wolfinger. Wolfinger started.—

"O Lord, Sir! how did you come to find out every thing? Indeed, Sir, I was a little unlucky in some company I got into, who enticed me to play."

"Play, villain!—so you played away the hire of iniquity, while your wife, and sick child, were perishing for want;—but they are now in better hands, and safe from your clutches, and Marsiglio's."

Frederick ruminated awhile; then, again addressing Wolfinger,

"If I spare your life, if I screen you from the eye of justice, will you—dare you publickly accuse Marsiglio?"

"Yes, by my life I will;"—answered Wolfinger.

"And can you swear, and with truth, before an earthly tribunal, before the eternal God of Heaven, that *he* enticed thee to the murder of the Baron of Linzendorf?"—

"Aye, Sir—in any court of the world, Sir;—he bribed me—he hired me to assist him in murdering the Baron of Linzendorf."

"One question more:—wilt thou go with me to England, and face Marsiglio?"

He was silent:—Frederick half raised the pistol.—

"I will; and never, by Heaven, Sir, never betray you again in any one concern in this world. You may now, Sir,—indeed you may trust me."

"*Trust* you," said his master, with a bitter smile. Frederick now ordered him not to lose a moment in preparing for their departure, and advised him, as he valued his existence, not to attempt escaping from him; for that, in such a case, he would rouse all the laws, and ministers of laws for his pursuit and destruction; the pretended La Pierre was then suffered to retire,

which he instantly did,—rejoicing, that, after all his terrors, he was still an inhabitant of this world, and sensibly visited by a vague, floating suspicion, that it would be better to repent at once, and live honestly for the future.—

His promised rewards for dishonesty would all fail, and his life had been, and still was, he thought in a precarious situation;—yet to decide finally, was difficult; —this he must think of another time.

Frederick now endeavoured to collect his scattered thoughts, and was going immediately to communicate what he had discovered, to the Baroness; when a person, who had been his principal agent in the concerns of his father, which he had now totally forgotten, entered, to inform him that all was concluded, and, that, after many difficulties. they had been, at last, successful. Frederick gave his receipt for ten thousand pounds, and immediately invested them in bills, payable to his father's agent in London.

He then proceeded to the house of Count Waldenberg.—It was now evening, and Frederick had been in violent agitation the whole day.—He found the Baroness, beyond his hopes, alone. The Count was engaged, and the Baroness had been prevented from accompanying him by the arrival of the young woman who was the bearer of Frederick's note,—and with whom she had been shut up in close conference. Frederick, nearly exhausted, threw himself into a chair.

As soon as he could command any degree of composure, he entered into a full detail of the discoveries which he had made. When he spoke of Marsiglio's letter, which he presented to the Baroness, for her perusal, he raved—he groaned—and at length, he wept. The emotions of the Baroness were strong, and various. Horror at the proofs respecting the fate of her husband; terror mingled with joy, at the danger and escape of Frederick, filled her mind; and when she beheld his grief,

when she anticipated his departure, she at the same time sympathized in his anguish, and lamented for herself:—the last words in her silent rumination, were,—"Happy Helena!"

When Beaumont had, at length, recovered the power of speech, "My first object in coming to this place," said he, "is attained: the business of my father is successfully concluded, and if it were otherwise, I must now, dearest, most amiable friend, have quitted you immediately. The Count, I hope, will return, before I leave you this evening; for, to-morrow, I set out before day-break:—Yes—I will hunt that miscreant through the world, and your wrongs shall descend, together with my own, on his accursed head. But, it is necessary that I should consult with the Count, on the immediate steps that must be taken when I find him. O that I might presume to wrest its vengeance from the hand of Heaven!—but that temptation, I trust, I shall resist: I hope so far to rein

in my fury as to deliver him up *whole* to the chastisement of the law."

"Do so, for Heaven's sake!" cried the Baroness.

"And now," said Frederick, "it is essential that the Count be acquainted with all his crimes;—but *I* cannot repeat my own sad story; to you, my dear Madam, I commit that task: I will only inform the Count that Marsiglio has also injured *me* in my tenderest feelings: on the rest, he and I will consult together apart: let us torture *you* no more."

"I will retire, when my brother returns," said the Baroness, and all that I can do shall be done. I will take care of the poor Bertha, depend on it."

"I am *sure* you will," said Frederick—"I had almost forgotten her:—Oh who takes care of my poor little blessed angel!—where, where is she now?—if in the power of that demon, she will die."—

The carriage of the Count Waldenberg was now heard in the court. The knocker

struck on the heart of the Baroness: it was the signal of separation. The agitation, which she felt it impossible wholly to conceal, she would not suffer to be witnessed by her brother. She arose, saying hastily,

"I will leave you at liberty to converse with the Count:—Farewell! and may Heaven protect, and prosper you!"—Her voice trembled—and tears filled her eyes.

"My dearest Madam," said Frederick—"is it thus we part after such kindness, such hospitality, such happiness as I could have enjoyed in your society, if the cloud of sorrow——" He could not end the sentence: he kissed her hand with tender reverence: "Farewell," said he; "Heaven keep you, 'till we meet in happier days!"—and as the Count ascended the stairs, the Baroness hastened through a door at the opposite end of the room.

The conference of Beaumont with Count Waldenberg was long and important.

The conclusion was, that as soon as Fre-

derick should legally secure Marsiglio, on the accusation of Wolfinger, and the declaration of Frederick respecting his letters, which Marsiglio's own letter would confirm —he (Beaumont) should give immediate information of it to Count Waldenberg; as there could be no doubt that, on *his* coming forward, the culprit would at once be given up to the German laws.

Count Waldenberg strongly recommended "that Beaumont should never suffer the vile Wolfinger to be for an instant, unobserved; not only because there could be no safety within his reach, but, lest he should take occasion, notwithstanding the threats of his master, to escape."

Frederick agreed as to the propriety of this measure. The Count, then, offered him the attendance of two trusty servants of his own, on his way to England. Beaumont would accept of but one.

With mutual expressions of friendship, gratitude, and esteem, the conference closed, and they parted.—Frederick sought not

repose that night. He had much to do, and more to think of; and as soon as all was ready,—he availed himself of the light of a waning moon,—and, attended by La Pierre,—hastily departed from Vienna.

CHAP. LXXV.

The mind, the nerves, the whole frame of Helena, had been shaken to the foundation by her afflictions, and consequent illness:—no wonder, then, that the letter which we have seen Marsiglio boasting that he had, himself, written respecting Beaumont, his marriage with the Baroness —his dissipated habits, &c.—had, at the first moment, subdued her; nor, that it had the further effect of making her recoil from the presence of Marsiglio.

Yet when she reflected on the steady character, and deep-rooted love of Frederick, as well as the frankness with which he had repeatedly written to her of the Baroness, her heart assured her that, notwithstanding all reports, all appearances, there must be some error, if not some misrepresentation: "yet, how," she thought,

"could so many circumstances be all preverted?"—"the whole town were said to be talking of the marriage!"—she turned sick at the thought, even while she disbelieved it.—

She thought herself *sure* that she disbelieved it;—yet, still—he wrote not!

Her sorrows hidden, with the tenderest precaution, from the eyes of her mother, *would*, sometimes, escape to the heart of her grateful, and faithful Marian. She would weep over the sufferings of her beloved young lady, and had too much native good sense, and feeling, to torture her with the common-place language of condolence. Yet, would she give her the best comfort the whole world could afford, by warmly declaring her unshaken faith in the constancy of Mr. Beaumont, and, in the goodness of Heaven, which would reward the duty and patience of them both.

The good girl would then implore her to walk out, for the advantage of enjoying the breezes from the sea. It was in one of

these walks which she was taking at Marian's particular entreaty, that she had met, and, in reply to his respectful inquiries, slightly spoken to,—Lord Edgeworth, who then chanced to be at Hastings; and so was his phaeton—but, it was Marsiglio, and Marsiglio alone, who, from observing that she was acquainted with him, instantly, with a stroke of his *pen*, conjured her into it—by his Lordship's side.

A few days after the fainting fit occasioned by Marsiglio's intelligence, Marian was persuading her young mistress to repeat her walk, when Mrs. Villiers entered her apartment: "My dear Helena," said she, "will you walk with me to the Library? I want to see what books are to be had."

Helena obeyed; they sat down in the library, and were looking over some books, when Marsiglio joined them. A crowd of loungers were assembled near the table, where lay the newspapers, when one of them read, half aloud, the account of an

elopement:—they descanted on it, and endeavoured to unriddle the initials, &c. Then, still in a half-subdued voice,

"Apropos of elopements"—said the same gay youth, who had read the paragraph, "I saw Egerton last night. He is lately returned from the continent, and tells me, that, passing through Berlin, just as he was wheeling off from an hotel, he saw that mad fellow, Beaumont, in a post-chaise, which drove up at full speed, to the door, with the loveliest creature in the universe by his side. Egerton popped out his head, for a better view, but, Beaumont popped up the blind, and affected not to see beyond his nose.—Egerton's whips then made a sudden turn, and he saw no more."

"Well done, Frederick!" replied another.

"'Lovely Thais sits beside thee,
Take the good the Gods provide thee!'"

Then arm in arm, half whistling, half laughing, they loitered away to the Parade.

Helena cast a look towards her mother. and, by a thousand rapid changes of complexion, let Marsiglio know that this unhoped-for dart had flown as true as if he had aimed it himself. He affected, however, to be as unmindful of consequences, as he was supposed to be ignorant of causes.—

He walked to the window, and took up a pamphlet.—Helena entreated her mother, in a whisper, to accompany her home.

Then the long-suppressed anguish found vent upon the bosom of her mother.—Then did she confess to her, what she had accidentally discovered from the letter that had been read to her by Mr. *Weber*.—Mrs. Villiers, indignant at Frederick's long-protracted silence, and far better acquainted with the fickleness of youthful lovers, than it was possible that Helena could be, doubted no longer that Frederick was lost for ever, and deserved to be forgotten.

The heart of Helena revolted at her conclusions; and as soon as it was pos-

sible, she sought refuge in solitude, from reasonings to which she could not yield, and which she, yet, presumed not to oppose.

For some days, she gave way to a despair that nearly overwhelmed her. Marian herself was perplexed with this last intelligence, yet would not acknowledge one doubt that might add to her dear young lady's uneasiness.

So soothing to the heart of Helena was this apparently immoveable confidence in Frederick, that, the next time she wandered along under the cliff, Marian was bidden to attend her on her walk. She chose the most unfrequented part of the beach. Again, and again, she took the same way, while Marian walked by her side, and talked of Frederick's inviolable constancy.

One evening that they had gone out later than usual, Helena wandered, pensively musing, and watching the moon's long line of radiance on the water.

"Dogs cease to bark,—the waves more gently roar,
And roll themselves asleep upon the shore."

Suddenly, the crying of a child attracted her attention. It advanced towards her.

"What ails you, poor boy?" she inquired.

He cried the more vehemently, saying, "Mother is very bad; she says she shall die, and she don't know what will become of me."

"Where is she?" asked the pitying Helena.

"There — yonder — at that there house."

It was not then in sight; but Helena remembered to have seen a small hut half way up the cliff;—which, however, she had been informed was uninhabited.

She quickened her steps towards it, supported by Marian, as she frequently slipped among the loose stones upon the beach.

They soon reached the house, and the boy stepped before to open the door for

them. Helena approached toward a bed of straw, in the corner of the room.

By the light of a glimmering candle, she perceived in it the face of an old woman;—but the black, bright eye which encountered hers, shewed no symptoms of indisposition.

The woman started up.

"Cuffee! Cuffee!" she cried—and instantly, from an opposite door, rushed a stout man of a deep, olive complexion, and seized a victim within the grasp of each savage hand.—

The Beldame grinned, crying,

"Hold them fast, for I don't know yet which they want."—

And now, Helena, and Marian, at the same dreadful moment, recognised the faces of the gipsies, whom Marian in particular, had known too well, ever to forget.

"This is all *I* want," cried Marsiglio, bursting into the room, and throwing his wicked arms around the shrieking Helena. —"Do you secure the other."

The hideous female, who had immediately left her bed, seizing Marian round the throat, menaced her with instant death, if she did not cease her squalling, and stand still;—for she was wildly clasping the waist of Helena, and, finding her cries unavailing, was endeavouring to tear open the hands of Marsiglio, and oblige him to let go his hold.

Helena fell into total insensibility, and became an easy prey to the ruffians, who instantly bore her away to the sea. They placed her in a boat, where she remained, still senseless in the arms of Marsiglio. He, as soon as the boat reached a small brig, about half a league from the shore, with the assistance of the sailors, carried her into it—and, lest Death should snatch her from his power, laid her softly on the deck, and eagerly watched her return to life and misery.

At length, she revived—saw the rough faces of remorseless men, who were bearing her away,—and beheld in the face

of the courteous, the worthy Mr. Weber, as she had ever thought him, strange expressions of triumph, malice, and eager admiration. She clasped her hands in agony—called on the name of her mother—and at last, burst into convulsive sobs of grief. In the mean time the wind blew fresh and fair, and the night was clear:—the vessel flew; and in the morning the wretched Helena perceived, from the window of the dismal cabin to which she had flown from Marsiglio, that the shores of England had disappeared.

The poor Marian, bound fast by her wrists, was left by the vile agents of a more vile employer, locked up within a lonely hut, without any light but the beams of the moon through the casement,—to bewail in tortures of body and mind, the strange and horrible fate of her adored young mistress.—

About the middle of the night she was found in this condition, exhausted with weeping, by the servants of Mr. Morley,

who, having been sent out in various directions, had, first, as it chanced, taken the contrary side of the town, above, and below, the cliff, and were now, at last, passing by this hut, without perceiving it, when the cries of Marian stopped their course.

She had scarcely strength, or courage, to return home to Mrs. Villiers, with the dreadful intelligence which she had to communicate; and bitterly bewailing and lamenting herself, she returned to the white house in the meadow,—which was the residence of Mr. Morley.

Nothing could equal the confusion in which she found the family.—Mrs. Villiers was raving for her daughter, poor Marian was almost carried into her presence.

"Where is my child?" exclaimed Mrs. Villiers, wildly.

Marian threw herself before her, and sobbed out all she knew.

Mrs. Villiers was seized with a severe illness, the immediate consequence of the horrors of her mind.

Marian felt a dreadful conviction that her poor mistress would die. She wrote to her mother:—she wrote to Mr. Melcombe.

As soon as it was possible, they both arrived. The terrors of Mr. Melcombe defied all his efforts to conceal them.

Emissaries, advertisements, all means were employed—in vain. No trace—no hope—was to be found.

CHAP. LXXVI.

When Helena beheld herself alone,—or worse than alone, amidst the world of waters, she was seized with an agony of despair—but the entrance of the vile Marsiglio roused her to instant exertion.

"Tell me," cried she, "most base and merciless traitor, why have you thus torn me from my mother—from my country—from my every hope of - - - - -"

She was nearly choked with her emotions—She had not had time to resume her questions, before Marsiglio approached her, and began to shock her ears by reflections on Frederick Beaumont, of whose "*former* love" for her he pretended he had been confidentially informed, and who, with equal effrontery, he asserted, had "now forsaken her."

"Nothing can have truth in it, that comes from *thee!*" cried she—"and,

least of all, a vile slander on a name—which is profaned by thy lips."

"Was it *I* who spoke of him in the library?"—asked he, with a sarcastic smile:—Helena remembered that it was not; and a faintness came over her at the recollection:—but what were her sensations, when the insidious Impostor endeavoured to soothe, to conciliate her: when he proceeded to an open avowal of his hateful passion;—when he even dared to warn her, in answer to her contemptuous abhorrence of his addresses, that if she should still continue to defy and scorn him, he would convey her to an house, in a desert wilderness in Germany, where resided one who had no will but his; where no eye, except his own, should ever behold her; whence no human power could ever rescue her.—While he thus spoke, she beheld his approach with a horror which seemed to freeze her faculties. A violent shriek burst from her, and feeling herself thus lost to all earthly guardianship,

she looked up to Heaven for protection, and strength, and vehemently pushing back the daring monster, she was assisted by a sudden roll of the vessel, in throwing him down at some distance from her.

She then clung to the side of the window, which was thrown up.

"And now," she exclaimed,—"move one step towards me, and I will seek shelter in the bosom of the sea."—

In a fury of passion, he flung out of the cabin; and the poor Helena, exhausted by all that she had endured from terror, and fatigue, sunk, almost breathless, to the floor.

"O Frederick! Frederick!" she cried in suffocating sobs, "couldst thou behold me now, be thou constant, or faithless, it would break thy heart!"

At length she arose, and hastened to hide herself in one of the small, dark cells within the cabin, where, staggering, she fell upon the bed, and when again she heard the voice of Marsiglio, could only

implore him not to disturb her, but let her die in peace." Again he began to fear that this was really probable, and, with one of those tones with which he had lured her into confidence, told her that, if she would be composed, he would not even speak to her, 'till she was recovered; adding, that he would send her some refreshment, which he entreated her to take. She merely replied, that she wanted nothing. He, however, sent her some slight nourishment by one of the seamen.

This being, though rough as the elements, appeared to pity her, and said that "it was a bad job, and he was sorry that he had any thing to do with any of their plots against such a sweet young lady."

She declined what he had brought her; but, looking upon him with those eyes which might have calmed a tiger,

"Heaven reward you," said she, "for those few words of mercy, and, should I ever escape from your barbarous employer, you shall be amply recompensed if you will but keep him from me."

"Nothing shall hurt you in this ship by G—," said the man, "though I ben't master—but I 'd sooner mutiny than let any harm come to you."

"Can't you stay in the cabin, and keep out that man?" asked Helena.

"He won't let me do that, mistress; but this ben't a very large ship: if he dares to turrify you again, call out for Tom Cannon, and I 'll be with you in a twinkling."

She found a momentary relief, as far as her present terrors were concerned, from this assurance; but no respite could her harassed spirits find from the torturing image of her mother's sufferings. Her mind, however, had imbibed a hope of procuring some means of escape, by the aid of this friendly seaman, as soon as she could once again set her weary foot on shore.

She ventured to propose to him the idea of assisting her; but he was so entirely a sailor, that he had not power to devise, or even execute, any scheme that was to be undertaken on dry land.

CHAP. LXXVII.

The mansion of the Baroness was at length repaired;—but the summer was now advancing, and being, from various causes, disgusted with the tumult of the town, she informed her brother, that she proposed retiring to her villa on the banks of the Danube.

Count Waldenberg, too well acquainted with the state of her mind and feelings, told her that he should be much better pleased if she would accompany him to his favourite seat in the mountains, which was at the distance of above an hundred miles from Vienna.

"The journey will do you good; for I do not think you are quite well, my dear sister: let me prevail upon you."

The Baroness would rather have been alone; but she reflected that it would be

wiser, better, and kinder to accompany her brother, and she consented. She placed the forsaken beings which Frederick had left in her charge, in a safe and comfortable situation, under the immediate care of her own house-keeper; and, accompanying her brother in his travelling carriage, bade adieu, with mingled satisfaction and regret, to the busy scene, in which she had lately experienced so much pleasure, and so much pain.

The journey of the first day was half social, half contemplative; it was marked by no very particular incident, either pleasant or otherwise. About the middle of the second day, they drove to a solitary inn, which stood on a point where two roads crossed each other. The carriage stopped, and the Count was handing his sister from it, when they observed a post-chaise advancing from one of the crossing roads to the same point; the blinds were drawn up; but a voice from within, crying out "Go on, go on!" arrested his attention.

The drivers said it was impossible, for that all the horses were ready to drop. A vehement execration over a blind, half let down, was the answer. It seemed to the Count that he knew the voice. He beckoned to his servants, bidding them to stand near him, and obey his slightest signal.

The horses of the advancing carriage stopped, and one of them fell panting to the ground.

The chaise-door was now opened, and the Count, drawing his hat over his face, waited in eager expectation for the traveller to appear. In a few moments he saw him slowly descending the step, and supporting a beautiful young woman, who seemed ready to sink to the earth.

"Assist me," said the Count to his servants, and, flying towards the traveller, he seized him furiously by the collar, saying, "Have I found thee, villain?"—Then to his attendants—"Hold him fast, I charge you."

The Baroness saw that it was Marsiglio;

and, shrieking with a mixture of horror and joy, ran into the house to hide herself from the scene, exclaiming—"Bring the lady; hasten—bring her to me;—it must, it must," said she, in stifled whispers, "be Beaumont's Helena."

It certainly was,—if that might be called Helena, from which life and motion seemed for ever fled. She had fainted as she entered the house, and her face had the paleness of death.

The Baroness caused her to be placed on a bed, and ordered every means she could devise to be applied for her recovery.

When Marsiglio felt the grasp of Count Waldenberg, and heard his angry voice announce his fate, a groan burst from his guilty breast, and his shivering limbs and ghastly visage confirmed, had confirmation been required, the whole truth.

"I accuse this man of murder," said the Count to the master of the inn; "secure him, and let him escape at your peril."

The master, the servants, stared with

horror; they fearfully surrounded the victim; he was pinioned, and conducted to an apartment, in which he was strongly confined at the top of the house. One of the Count's servants was stationed as his centinel, and two others were appointed to walk beneath his windows, till arrangements should be made for carrying him to Vienna.

When the half-dying Helena at length opened her eyes, she looked wildly around, crying out—"Where am I now?"—with an expression so touchingly pathetic, as if she had said "What new miseries are prepared for me?" that the Baroness's smile of pleasure at her revival was bedewed with tears.

"You are safe from the wretch who would soon have destroyed you," said the Baroness.

The hapless victim heard her not, but continued her fearful gaze, as if every instant expecting some one to enter.

"Look at me, sweet Lady," said the Baroness, in a voice of kindness, "speak to

me; no one shall hurt you; you are safe; I entreat you to be satisfied that you are safe."

"Am I?" said Helena, with an air of distraction—"Where—where is he?"—"Bound—fast bound—locked up!" said the Baroness, as well as she could speak. "Is he?" said she, half smiling. "O my head! I wish I could sleep before he comes again! Oh don't let him come again," clasping her arms round the Baroness.

"Poor dear creature," said the Baroness, holding her to her heart, "her reason is gone.—O that monster Marsiglio!"—"Who is that?" asked Helena.—"No matter," cried the Baroness, recollecting herself; "lie down, my dear Madam, and try to sleep."

"Have you nothing of a composing nature to administer to her immediately?" asked the Baroness of her woman, who had followed her in another carriage.

The young woman ran out, and shortly afterward returned with some laudanum ready prepared.

"Drink this to oblige me," said the Baroness; and, on her instant compliance, ordered the room to be darkened, dismissed the attendants, and, fastening the door, seated herself by the side of Helena, anxiously watching every breath she drew, till she fell asleep.

Her sleep was long and heavy. When she awoke, she started up, crying out, "Where is that man? Not here again I hope! O tell me!"

The Baroness admitted a ray of light into the room, to shew her that he was not there, and immediately returning to her again, began to soothe and comfort her by the language of kindness, and by repeated assurances that she was safe from his intrusion. The Baroness perceived with delight that her eyes had somewhat a more composed, though still highly wrought expression; they were fixed, with eager amazement, on those of the Baroness, from which were slowly distilling the drops of heart-felt sympathy. "And what angel of mercy are you?" cried Helena.

"No angel, sweet Lady, but one who will rejoice to be your friend and protector from all evil, if it be possible," answered the Baroness.

The harassed spirits, and wearied frame of Helena could not support with calmness the sudden transition in her fate, and she burst into a vehemence of weeping, which the Baroness would not attempt to control, but retired for a few minutes towards the window. Helena soon recalled her. "Do not leave me," she cried—"How kind you have been to me! Tell me, I implore you, who you are—Oh what would have become of me, had you not rescued me from that dreadful——" She stopped, as if still fearful of the approach of her persecutor.

"I shall have much to inform you of," answered the Baroness, when you are strong enough to bear such a relation; at present be content to know that you are safe in the guardianship of Count Waldenberg and the Baroness of Linzendorf."

"What!" exclaimed Helena, "the

friends of——; are you, can you be, the Baroness of Linzendorf?" in a tone of astonishment mingled with chagrin, her mind still perplexed by what she had heard from so many different quarters.

"You have been every way deceived," said the Baroness; "you have been taught to tremble at my name."

"Deceived!—it *was* a deception then," cried Helena, in a transport, the effect of which she little thought of—"And *is*, then, Frederick faithful?"

"As the needle to the pole," said the Baroness, with feelings which it nearly suffocated her to suppress.

Helena uttered a long, heart-piercing cry of joy, and threw herself, in still more convulsive agitation than before, upon the bed on which she sat.

It was long before the idle observations of the young men in the library recurred to her mind; when they did, she heeded them no more; what they alluded to she knew not, cared not. The Baroness was the

friend; the confidential friend of Frederick, and *she* had pronounced him faithful :—he had not, then, loved the Baroness, amiable, attractive as she was; whom, then, could he have loved? Helena was satisfied that it was herself alone.

"And where is he?" she inquired, as soon as she had found her voice.—"Flown to England to deliver you, and seize upon Marsiglio, which is the real name of the man who has deceived you, under the name of Weber."

"Heaven be praised that they will not meet," said Helena.

And now, compared with the tortures of the last few weeks, of what import were the difficulties, the obstacles, raised by Frederick's father, or her mother? she would submissively await the pleasure of both, but she would never despair again; and in that last worst possibility of never bein[illegible] [illegible]ited to Frederick, she should neit[illegible] [illegible]ve nor die without consolation, sinc[illegible] [illegible] [illegible]ill love, and be beloved

by him, and hope to live the life of angels with him in Heaven.

She was ready to worship the Baroness for the intelligence she had given her, and fondly clasping her, while shedding the tears of happiness on her shoulder, she softly murmured—" I feel already as if you were the sister of my heart."

But what were the sensations of the Baroness when she found her heart linger at meeting this advance; astonishment, self-reproach, and self-disdain, rapidly succeeded each other in her mind.

In the sufferings and sorrows of Helena, her whole soul had been engaged; she had admired, she had regarded her with a species of enthusiasm; *why* did that enthusiasm abate?

Indignant at the whispered reply, again she was all herself, and warmly answering the kind embrace of her happy rival, she shed repentant tears in her bosom—

CHAP. LXXVIII.

HELENA was too much agitated, too much disordered, to support an introduction to the Count, during any part of that day. Such accommodation as the house would afford, was procured for the whole party; and the next morning, after the first night of sleep and security she had enjoyed since she had been so rudely borne away, Helena, attired from the Baroness's wardrobe, and leaning on her supporting arm, descended with trembling steps, to a small apartment, where the Count awaited them at the breakfast-table.

Her lovely countenance, in which, through the languor of illness and distress, he could yet discern the spirit of animation, and intelligence, attracted him with a magnet's power, and he felt, that if

Beaumont could be forgiven for refusing homage to his sister, this idol to which he had previously bowed, might plead his apology.

Meanwhile, the thoughts of her mother's sufferings continued to press heavily on Helena's mind. Frederick, too, might arrive at Hastings in time to hear that she was lost, before it was possible he could know that she was found. As soon, therefore, as she had spoken her impressive acknowledgments to the Count for his timely succour, her first inquiry was—how she could expedite to her mother a few lines of assurance that she was in safety. The Count undertook to forward her letter with the utmost possible speed;—and their conversation then naturally fell on the vile author of all these perplexities; of whose darker crimes, however, Helena was yet uninformed.

The Count said th[illegible] of his servant ran thus:—

That—" When h[illegible] o give

him sustenance, he was gloomy and sullen, and looked," the man said, " like the D—l himself," and that he believed he did not sleep much; for he had often awakened him by horrible imprecations on himself and the villain Wolfingar, who, he supposed, had betrayed him."

Helena shuddered at this account of Marsiglio.

" He is a *prodigy* of wickedness," said the Baroness, with a countenance of sudden horror.

The Count left the room to arrange the return of the whole party to Vienna; for so himself and his sister had determined it should be, and that the Baroness should entertain Helena at his own house, till an answer could be received to the letter which she was to address to her mother, from which answer she would probably learn that Beaumont was instantly returning to fetch her back to England.

When the ladies were alone, the Baroness expressed he[illegible]xiety to hear more minute

particulars than Helena had yet been able to recount to her, respecting her late dreadful adventure.

Helena connected her story as well as it was in her power to do, relating her ineffectual application to the sailor for assistance in her escape, and another effort to the same purpose after her arrival. This being attended with no better effect, the relentless savage had borne her, wearied, exhausted, and scarcely in her senses; and at length, hopeless of relief, toward the spot where she had found rest and safety in the arms of the Baroness;—whereas, had she crossed the road but five minutes before the arrival of her protectors, she would infallibly have been carried beyond all chance of having ever seen them in this world, and mother, lover, friends, all—all had been lost.

"How shall I ever repay such a debt as I owe you?" cried Helena, pressing the hand of the Baroness.

"It *is* repaid a thousand fold in the

consciousness of having been thus accidentally useful to you—in yourself so deserving of the gentlest of care; and to us every way interesting, as claiming all the tenderness of our friend, Mr. Beaumont."

"Not *all* the tenderness," replied Helena;—"you know not with what a warmth of admiration, of esteem, of friendship, he wrote of you;" and now, when he knows what you have done for *me*,"—the Baroness heaved a sigh; and the Count, entering, informed the Ladies that all would be ready for their departure within half an hour; then addressing Helena, he said, that if she would, within that time, entrust her letter to him, he would dispatch it from thence to the nearest port, by a special messenger.

The letter was written, and forwarded, together with one from the Count himself, giving information of the seizure of Marsiglio, addressed to Beaumont, and summoning him to return immediately, bringing Woningel with him, to appear against the culprit before a public tribunal.

And now the Count, sending a few paces forwards the carriage, in which Marsiglio was seated between two trusty guards, with his arms bound, followed the Ladies into his own travelling coach, and, within two days, all arrived safely at Vienna.

The Count lodged his information respecting Marsiglio, who was immediately committed to prison, there to await the proofs which Count Waldenberg engaged to produce against him, by means of Beaumont and Wolfinger.

CHAP. LXXIX.

The weary wanderer had now found shelter, kindness, and repose, in the mansion of the Baroness of Linzendorf. The Count had solicited permission to be her banker, until she could obtain the necessary supplies from her mother.

She accepted this accommodation to a small amount; it was but little that she could possibly require; for most earnestly she craved and readily obtained permission to remain, in the present anxious situation of her mind, unmolested by the visits and society of strangers.

The Baroness hinted to her friends, that her guest was an invalid; and Helena beguiled the tedious interval, during which she awaited the reply to her letter, in the manner most acceptable to her—in reading and conversation with the Baroness, varied

only by the frequent visits of Count Waldenberg, toward whom she felt the deepest gratitude and regard, and whose manners drew from her respect and admiration, though they did not, could not, go directly to her heart, like those of the sweet, the dignified, the engaging Baroness.

The situation of Helena was, assuredly, at this moment, still more discouraging than it had been when the first letters of Mr. Beaumont had been the means of banishing his son from England; yet then she was miserable; and now her sudden rescue from such overwhelming wretchedness, communicated to her mind something of comparative tranquillity.

The torturing apprehensions of her mother, she hoped and believed, must be, by this time, removed.

She felt herself the cherished inmate of the friends of Frederick. Satisfied of his fidelity, and trusting shortly to behold him again, she was no longer the prey of despondency, and there were even moments

when her native cheerfulness would once more play about her heart, and animate her conversation. The Baroness felt her power, and sincerely loved her, in defiance of all self-interested regrets; and the Count, while he beheld and listened to her, would whisper to himself, in the strictest confidence, that "it would have been *possible* for a German Noble to have married *Miss* Helena Villiers."

END OF VOL. III.

nter, Little Queen Street.